DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 213 554 RC 013 215

AUTHOR Smale, Melinda
TITLE Women in Mauritania: The Effects of Drought and Migration on Their Economic Status and Implications for Development Programs.
SPONS AGENCY Agency for International Development (IDCA), Washington, D.C. Office of Women in Development.
PUB DATE 31 Oct 80
CONTRACT PASA-AG/MAU-300-1-80
NOTE 201p.; For a related document, see RC 013 214.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC09 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Caste; Change; Decision Making; Developing Nations; Developmental Programs; Economic Development; *Economic Status; Ethnic Groups; *Females; Foreign Countries; *Futures (of Society); Income; Labor Force; *Migration; Occupations; Role Perception; Rural Environment; Rural to Urban Migration; *Sex Role; Social Class; Social Status; Tribes
IDENTIFIERS *Drought; *Mauritania

ABSTRACT

In order to indicate potential income-generating programs for women, 67 women in the river region and selected sites in the Assaba and the Guidimakha were interviewed in 1980 to illuminate effects of the 1970s-80s drought and male migration on Mauritanian women. Hypotheses were based on the drought causing unprecedented disruption to Mauritanian society, women (through male migration) either being abandoned or de-facto heads of households, and the desire of Mauritanian women (whose problems could be presented under one common rubric) for income-generating activities. The focus on income generation and current measures of women's status met obstacles in cultural definitions of work, wealth, and other economic indices. Ultimately the fundamental unit of analysis chosen was the household production unit (galle) and camp. Neither drought nor migration is new to Mauritanian society, and each production system has adapted, after its own fashion, to migration. While cultural and social customs inhibit Mauritanian women from advancing rapidly as income producers, a new household division of labor is forming, although women's control over the products of their labor is evolving more slowly. Findings are region-specific and should not be generalized to the whole population; interviews reported at the end of the document went through two stages of translation and should not always be accepted literally. (BRR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED213554

RC

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Women in Mauritania

The Effects of Drought and Migration on their Economic Status and Implications for Development Programs

APR 1982
ERIC / CRESS
RECEIVED

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

October 1980

Distributed by
Office of Women in Development
Agency for International Development
International Development Cooperation Agency
Washington, D.C. 20523

RC01 32 15

WOMEN IN MAURITANIA:
THE EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND MIGRATION ON THEIR ECONOMIC STATUS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

BLANK PAGE
DO NOT FILM

PREPARED FOR:

Office of Women in Development
Agency for International Development, and
USAID/Mauritania

Under PASA AG/MAU-300-1-80

BY:

Melinda Smale
Office of International Cooperation and Development
U. S. Department of Agriculture

31 October 1980

The views and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and should not be attributed to the Agency for International Development or to any individual acting in its behalf.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank those who gave me their time and close cooperation before departing to Mauritania, and to whom I owe the background material so difficult to find but so helpful to my own understanding: Arvonne Fraser, Paula Goddard and the staff at the Women in Development Office of the Agency for International Development; Emmy Simmons, Elsa Chaney, Martha Lewis and Carol Yulinski, whose experience was invaluable to me; Patricia McClure of New Transcentury Foundation; Pat Wetmore of USDA/OICD's Reports and Technical Inquiries Section; and, of course, my fellow workers at USDA/OICD Africa Programs for their consistent support - Kay Roosa, Jim Black, Theresa Przbylek, Ron Jones, Peter Koffsky, and especially Nancy Oakley.

I would like also to thank those who gave me such generous support in Mauritania: Mission Director John Hoskins and his staff, and especially John Grayzel and his family who were not only a source of intellectual guidance but of moral support; Allan Reed and his family, Linda Neuhauser and Mona Fikry; the RAMS project personnel; the Peace Corps staff and volunteers who provided me with many an insight and welcome at their villages; typists Magda Williams and Elizabeth (who produced the first draft of this document), and Mme. Kane and Rakia Kane who assembled the researcher reports for us; and Tekber.

Above all, I would like to thank those who worked so hard not only as translators but as cultural interpreters without whom none of our information-gathering would have been possible: Demba and his family, Ahmed Salem and his family, Dieo and her family, Mariem, Awa, Ba Khlidou and his family, Abou Kane.

Finally, I thank Julia Allen and Ross Hoff for holding down my own tent during this seasonal migration.

MELINDA S. SMALE

PAGE

LIST OF TABLES/VISUAL AIDS ---------- v

FOREWORD ---------- vi

INTRODUCTION TO MAURITANIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE ---------- vii

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS ---------- xiii

SUMMARY ---------- xvii

SECTION I. PROTOTYPES: WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION UNIT BY ETHNIC GROUP ---------- 1

A. The Productive Activities of Women within the Sedentarized Toucouleur and Semi-sedentarized Peulh Production Systems ---------- 1

A.1.a Toucouleur Social Structure and Organization of Production ---------- 1

A.1.b Uncasted Occupations: Cropping, Gathering and Herding Activities ---------- 5

A.1.b(1) Cropping Activities ---------- 5

A.1.b(2) Gathering Activities ---------- 9

A.1.b(3) Herding Activities ---------- 10

A.1.c Casted Occupations ---------- 12

A.1.c(1) Fishing ---------- 12

A.1.c(2) Griote Occupations ---------- 14

A.1.c(3) Artisan Occupations ---------- 15

A.1.c(4) Servile Occupations ---------- 15

A.2 Status Concept Deriving from Women's Role in Household Production ---------- 17

A.2.a Women's Complementary and Secondary Production ---------- 17

A.2.b Diversification of Risk and Women's Value Expressed as Labor Potential ---------- 19

A.2.c Polygamy and Household Revenues ---------- 20

A.3 Effect of Production and Status Concept on Peulh/Toucouleur Women's Productive Potential ---------- 21

A.3.a Access to Field, Household and Marketplace Worlds ------- 21

A.3.b Access to Capital ---------- 21

A.3.b(1) Land Tenure Difficulties ---------- 23

A.3.b(2) Transferable Capital, Gold and Livestock ------- 24

A.3.c Access to Village Mutual Support Organizations ---------- 26

PAGE

B. Elements of the Soninke and Wolof Production Systems ---------- 28

B.1 Soninke Division of Labor and Responsibilities ---------- 28

B.2 Comments Provided by Wolof Women Interviewed in Nouakchott ----- 30

C. The Productive Activities of Women within the Bidan Nomad and Semi-nomad Productive Systems ---------- 32

C.1.a The Activities of Noblewomen in the Zawaya Camp --------- 32

C.1.b Hassani Noblewomen's Activities ---------- 34

C.1.c Zenaga Women's Occupations ---------- 35

C.1.d Forgeronnes and Griote Occupations ---------- 36

C.1.e Abid/Haratin Labor ---------- 36

C.2 Status Concept Deriving from Women's Role in Household Production ---------- 38

C.2.a Dependence on Servile Labor ---------- 38

C.2.b Separation of Bidan Men's and Women's Activities --------- 38

C.2.c Value as Expressed in Leisure ---------- 39

C.2.d Value in Bridewealth ---------- 40

C.3 Effects of Productive Role and Status Concept on Women's Productive Potential ---------- 41

C.3.a Relative Isolation and Confinement to Tent ---------- 41

C.3.b Access to Capital, Political Institutions and Skills ---- 42

SECTION II. EVOLVING PARADIGMS: PRESSURES AFFECTING MAURITANIA PRODUCTIVE SYSTEMS ---------- 44

A. Pre-drought Pressures ---------- 44

A.1 Relocation of Trade Loci ---------- 44

A.2 Deteriorating Terms of Trade for Agricultural and Livestock Products ---------- 45

A.3 Consequent Importance of Merchant and Migrant Activities ------- 46

A.3.a Credit Relationships ---------- 46

A.3.b Seasonal Migrations ---------- 48

A.3.b(1) Bidan/Haratin Migration ---------- 48

A.3.b(2) Peulh/Toucouleur Migration ---------- 50

A.3.b(3) Soninke Migration ---------- 53

B. Drought Pressures ---------- 54

B.1 Nomad Dispossession and Loss of Productive Force ---------- 54

B.2 Accelerated Migration, Changed Migration Paths, and Change in Composition of Migrant Population ---------- 55

PAGE

B.3 Sedentarization in the Interior and Orientation to the Road and Market Outlets ---------- 57

B.4 Aid Dependence in the Interior ---------- 59

C. Effects of Migration and Drought Pressures on Women's Economic Activities and Position in the Household ---------- 60

C.1 Rural Conditions ---------- 60

C.1.a Enforced Immobility of Bidan Women ---------- 60

C.1.a(1) Inertia and Lack of Resources ---------- 60

C.1.a(2) Breakdown of Caste Division of Labor and Sporadic Income-Earning Activities of the Bidan ------ 62

C.1.a(3) Non-profitability of Known Skills ---------- 63

C.1.a(4) Insecurity: The Pull of the Town ---------- 65

C.1.b Selective Mobility of Peulh, Toucouleur and Soninke Women ---------- 68

C.1.b(1) Increased Productive Activity of Women and Change in Household and Caste Division of Labor 68

C.1.b(1)(a) Peulh Women's Changing Conditions -- 68

C.1.b(1)(b) Toucouleur Women's New Occupations - 69

C.1.b(1)(c) Soninke Women's Changing Conditions 73

C.1.b(2) Frequency of Female Outmigration: The Appeal of the Town ---------- 74

C.2 Urban Responses to Changing Conditions ---------- 79

C.2.a Peuhl, Toucouleur, Soninke and Wolof Urban Patterns ----- 79

C.2.a(1) Breakdown of Labor Complementarity Between Men and Women ---------- 79

C.2.a(2) New Urban Networks ---------- 80

C.2.a(2)(a) The 'Secret' Savings Association --- 80

C.2.a(2)(b) Social Support Networks for Divorcées, Unemployed and Less Wealthy -- 81

C.2.a(2)(c) The Travel Support Network --------- 82

C.2.a(3) Strengths and Strains of the Extended Family --- 83

C.2.a(4) Exogamy/Polygamy Variations ---------- 84

C.2.b Bidan and Haratin Patterns ---------- 86

C.2.b(1) The Lure of Commerce, Management and Real Estate 86

C.2.b(2) Persistence of Inactivity: Social and Resource Constraints ---------- 88

C.2.b(2)(a) Social Constraints ---------- 88

C.2.b(2)(b) Resources ---------- 90

PAGE

C.2.b(3) Dependence on Men: Exorbitant Brideprice and Serial Marriage ---------- 91

SECTION III. OBSERVATIONS AND PROJECT-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS ---------- 95

A. General Observations on the Orientation of Government and Donor Assistance ---------- 95

B. Rural Observations and Recommendations ---------- 98

B.1 Access Considerations ---------- 98

B.2 Crop Production Considerations ---------- 99

B.3 Livestock Production Considerations ---------- 100

B.4 Forestry Byproduct Considerations ---------- 101

B.5 Marketing Considerations ---------- 101

B.6 Rural Food Processing and Transformation Considerations -------- 102

C. Urban Observations and Recommendations ---------- 103

C.1 Employment Opportunities ---------- 103

C.2 Savings and Investment Networks: Organizations and Associations 106

C.3 Training Considerations ---------- 107

APPENDIX 1. Preliminary Questionnaire ---------- 109

APPENDIX 2. Nouakchott Interviewee Responses ---------- 113

APPENDIX 3. Selected Nouakchott Day Reports ---------- 119

APPENDIX 4. Briefs of CPF/PMI ---------- 150

APPENDIX 5. Villages Visited - June-August 1980 ---------- 154

GLOSSARY ---------- 155

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ---------- 157

FOOTNOTES - ENGLISH TRANSLATION ---------- 160

LIST OF TABLES/VISUAL AIDS

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
1	Classification of Mauritanian Women's Activities in Rural Areas by Destination of Product and Remuneration of Labor	xxvi
2	A Simplified Classification of Fouta Social Structure by Title, Occupation and Marital Determinants	4
3	Cultivation Labor Days per Hectare on Dieri and Walo Plots by Family Member	8
4	Some Fruits and Leaves Cited for Use as Condiments and in Tanning in River Region	9
5	Polygamy and Household Revenues	21
6	Six-Month Budget of Nobleman	33
7	Migration Revenues as Percentage of Revenue, Average Fouta Household, 1957-58, per Person/Year	52
8	An Example of the Comparative Profitability of Mat Making and Tanning	64
9	Some Comparisons of Pre-drought and Drought Production by Men and Women (Toucouleur, Peulh, Soninke)	77
10	Number of Marriages Contracted by Ethnic Group	83
11	Second Plan Support to Women: Investment Disbursement and Project Realization as of October 1976	96
12	Third Plan Support to Women: Planned Investment and Percentage of Total Investment	97
13	Estimated National Employment, Potential Employment and Underemployment	105
14	Third Plan Estimates of Total Female Population, Active Population and Activity by Sector	105
15	Secondary Educational Institutions for Women and Other Institutions	108

VISUAL AID		
1	Profile of Land Bordering the River	6
2	Blacktop Road Proximity: Access to Resources and Mobility	67
3	Some Determinants of Women's Production Potential in Mauritanian Production Systems, Pre-drought and Drought, by Ethnic Group and Socio-occupational Group	93

FOREWORD

In 1979, in line with a philosophy that a continuous increase in country specific knowledge was an indispensable part of a dynamic program of policy planning and project implementation, AID/Nouakchott asked Barbara Abeillé, a local hire researcher, to provide us with some perspective on how Mauritania's women see their lives and problems in light of the country's rapidly changing circumstances. Her report, "A Study of Female Life in Mauritania," which has been reproduced for general distribution by AID/PPC/WID and is recommended background reading to this present work, gave the mission its first real taste of the Mauritanian woman's situation.

To respond to the insights gained from Barbara Abeillé's report demanded a far more profound and technical understanding of the socio-economic circumstances women in Mauritania face and to which any development plan must adjust. To provide such an in-depth picture required an effort beyond available Mission resources. At this juncture, the Office of Women in Development, under its technical assistance project, provided the Mission with the assistance of Melinda Smale, an international economist with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Smale's work, presented here, provides much more than was expected. It not only furnishes a vivid picture of Mauritanian women's economic and social status but it also puts them in the context of the whole society and forcefully demonstrates how disregarding the reality of women's lives not only does injury to them but to any real understanding of the society in which they live as an inseparable part.

Because women are an integral part of their society, some elemental understanding of Mauritania's social structure is a prerequisite for comprehending the context of their lives. The introduction to this study is a revision of that originally provided for Barbara Abeillé's study and is reproduced here at the request of Melinda Smale.

The Office of Women in Development, in collaboration with AID/Mauritania is pleased to present this document in the hope that the specific information will be useful to project design teams and individuals and organizations implementing projects in Mauritania and with the belief that the study can serve as a model which other Missions might consider replicating.

INTRODUCTION TO MAURITANIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE[1]

Mauritania's socio-cultural situation which forms the background for this study often strikes outsiders as unusually complex and difficult to understand. It certainly is different from that to which most westerners are acculturated and in that aspect provides a refreshing opportunity to wash clean one's mind of numerous ethnocentric stereotypes. Unfortunately, it is these stereotypes that can also block one's understanding of it. This is especially true of four crucial concepts: tribe, ethnic group, class and caste. These four terms are continuously confused and the term "tribe" totally misused.

A tribe is a political unit. This unit may claim descent from a common ancestor or not. Its members may belong to the same ethnic group or class or not. What is important is that they recognize belonging to a unit which exists based on some present or past common interest in exerting power either to obtain or protect themselves or their resources. Tribes are concrete entities made up of member individuals who can "gather," "appoint" leaders, make war, etc. People can be admitted to or thrown out of a tribe.

An ethnic group is a somewhat more abstract entity than a tribe. It exists based on a feeling of shared identity on the part of people who possess a common life style, language, religion, or other major cultural institution. One belongs to an ethnic group because both the individual and others "feel" they belong. A person is neither "admitted" nor "thrown-out" of an ethnic group, and in fact people of the same ethnic group may often deny the legitimacy of each other's claimed identity. There is no inherent political basis to ethnic identity though political units can manipulate ethnic differences for such purposes. However, members of the same ethnic group need not be allies and, in fact, may have always been enemies.

Class is a still more abstract concept than ethnic group. People are members of the same "class" when someone "classifies" them together based on some common trait. While people may see themselves as members of a certain class, this is not a prerequisite for ascribing membership. Someone can be classified as a member of the working class based on the job he does even if he believes he is a descendent of the King of England and entitled to be considered royalty.

---

[1]Author: John Grayzel, Sociologist, USAID/Nouakchott

Caste is the most specific of these crucial concepts. When applied to West African societies, it is used in the very general meaning of the division of societies into hierarchically rank-endogamous-occupational groups; the relation between these groups having ritual as well as economic significance.

All of the groups in question, and in fact all of the groups in the western Sudan who were integrated functioning parts of one or more of the indigenous empires of the past, share a basic common class structure consisting of: Free People (nobles and commoners), Casted People (different craftsmen [artisans] and entertainers [griots]), Freed People (former slaves) and Slaves. Likewise, the casted divisions of these structures were largely the same (weavers, leatherworkers, entertainers, etc.). The similarity of social structure, the migratory nature of the area's population, the fact that marriage rules apply more strictly to first marriages and become progressively looser thereafter, and the fact that, except for slave status, the offsprings' status follows that of the father alone, permits a much greater social mobility over a generation or two than would otherwise seem likely.

To understand Mauritanian society, one must understand its ethnic groups, its tribes, socio-economic classes and its castes. The major ethnic groups and subdivisions are as follows:

The Hassaniya speakers who predominate over the majority of the country except along the river are divisible into two crucial subgroups - the Bidan or white Maures and the Haratin or black Maures. The Bidan (white Maures) are traditionally further divided into Z'waya (religious or "marabout" groups), Hassan (warrior groups), Zenaga (free tributary groups), Mu'allamin (craftsmen) and Ighyuwn (entertainers). Besides the traditional occupation by which these subgroups are identified, they generally involve themselves in other commercial trading or livestock raising, or both.

The Haratin (black Maures) are commonly referred to as "freed slaves," (in contrast to the term "Abid" which means a captured slave). They are viewed as the descendents of former black slaves, originally taken from along the river, Mali or Senegal. Some live as an integral part of a larger Bidan encampment, others have their own encampments and work as herders, or are settled in Haratin agricultural communities. While they are generally held in low esteem in some areas of Mauritania, Haratin are considered higher than Zenaga. This is especially true in eastern areas where some Haratin groups have risen above their normal sharecropper role to acquire considerable herds of animals.

The Toucouleur are the agricultural populations who dominate both sides of the Senegal River, where, in the centuries prior to colonial domination, they lived under a highly stratified theocracy. While the traditional divison of their society into free men (Rimbe), artisans (Nyenybe) and captives (Maccube) still has meaning in terms of an individual's social status, it no longer dictates either actual occupation or the actual power relationships between different subgroups and particular individuals.

The Peulh (Fulbe, Fula or Fulani) are cattle pastoralists (though many now also cultivate) whose language, Fulfulde, is very similar to Puular, the Toucouleur language. In terms of social status, the Peulh largely function as a semi-itinerant cattle (and thereby capital) owning class, equivalent in status to the Torobe (Toucouleur religious nobles). Some confusion as to their practices and class position exists because a fair number of their former slaves called "Rimiibe" have adopted their lifestyle and to outsiders present themselves as "authentic" Peulh.

The Wolof are the single largest ethnic group in Senegal. While they too had a traditional stratified class society, its traditional divisions are largely meaningless today. This is especially true among the basically expatriate communities found in Mauritania near the border region around Rosso and in the capital, Nouakchott. Because they are the predominant group in Senegal, they more than any others can easily integrate into Senegalese society and therefore their being in Maunitania generally represents a response to opportunities already existant which they profitably exploit (i.e., urban skills such as carpentry, masonry, etc.).

The Soninke (Sarakolle) are predominant in the Guidimakha region bordering eastern Senegal and Mali. Their social structure and organization closely resemble that of the Malian Bambara and stresses hard work, close cooperation and extremely tight extended family relations under the authority of a patriarch. From the beginning of their history, they have been closely associated with male exploitation of migratory economic activities, either as traders or laborers. Local power was traditionally allotted and maintained by several powerful lineage groups. Perhaps the greatest reversal they have suffered since independence is to see their region of Mauritania, which was in colonial time a favored commercial outlet to the river trade, become a backwater area now dependent on a marginal road system which links them to a distant coastal capital.

Of all these groups only the Hassaniya-speaking Bidans and Haratins have tribes. The Toucouleur, Peulh, Wolof and Soninke (Sarakolle) are not tribes nor do they belong to tribes. They are united in extended family groups of different sizes and cohesion.

Hassaniya culture has traditionally been an essentially nomadic society save for a few trading nexi, and resting and religious centers, generally in the oases areas. Most of the relationships that unite people are therefore more social than residential since residential patterns are so fluid. To the extent that geographic identity is important, it usually occurs on the level of regional identities that express themselves when people find themselves third-party strangers (i.e., in Nouakchott, people often see a unity among those from Trarza, as opposed to others from Tagant, or Adrar; this phenomenon is being somewhat both expressed and catered to by the new GIRM decision to denote administrative regions by their traditional names).

The social cement that unites people extends across regions. Basically, a Bidan (white Maure) belongs to one of a large number of tribes or clans (Qabila) whose members theoretically descend from a common ancestor. These, however, generally are large and ancient to the point of having little meaning in terms of the management of everyday life. As a result they break down into smaller factions called Fakhdh, or "fractions." In theory, members of the same Fakhdh also descend from a common descendent of the original founder of the Qabila. In reality, however, membership in both a Qabila and Fakhdh can change, which are as much an alliance of people of similar social status as they are actual kin groups. Moreover it is usually the Fakhdh that is the actual functioning alliance and in fact members of different Fakhdh of the same Qabila may be actually allied against each other. The Fakhdh themselves are composed of patrilineal extended families (father and sons) called Ahel, which are the most fundamentally important kin units, especially since divorce is quite frequent in many areas and the nuclear family of husband, wife and children is therefore unstable.

In the rural areas, the basic living unit is the Khayma or tent, which generally is synonymous with the nuclear family. The Frig is the encampment of which three different categories are generally recognized: (a) small Frig from 1-15 tents, generally referred to as a Khyam; (b) Frig of 10-20 tents called Nazla; and (c) very large encampments, called Massa. The Massa where the chief has his tent, is referred to as Helle or El Kariya (the tribal center).

Such a settlement may be divided into sections or "neighborhoods" referred to as Halagaiz, Halgay or Halagai (circles).

The situations existing among the other ethnic groups are quite different. The Toucouleur and Wolof live in settled communities along the river which are not only permanent but in some cases quite ancient. Such settlements are often characterized by substantial investments in both personal and community physical infrastructure (houses and mosques) and, depending on size, are further divisible into neighborhoods (quartiers) and family concessions. The same is true of the Soninke except that these communities are usually inland and more cohesive than those of the Toucouleur and Wolof. The Peulh (Fulbe) tend to live in smaller hamlets (wuro) usually composed of straw huts sometimes surrounded by flimsy fences. Sometimes these are occupied seasonally if the whole family travels with the herd. Other times only specific herders (e.g., teenage boys) will leave with the animals while the others stay home. The pattern is generally referred to as transhumance - having fixed home locations but with substantial seasonal movement of at least some members of the household. However, these fixed locations are neither as permanent nor do they function as an interdependent community as do Toucouleur communities.

Of course today the situation is rapidly changing. In the last ten years, the country's population has gone from being two-thirds nomad, one third sedentary, to exactly the opposite (one third nomad, two-thirds sedentary). However, the change has been so recent that, generally speaking, Mauritania does not possess the type of well established urban population, found in many other African countries, whose values and ties are now well divorced from that of the rural population. Most urban dwellers, from the head of state to the unemployed squatter, are still closely tied to rural values and specific rural communities.

While change is occurring in regard to ethnic, tribal and class identity, the old categories are still operative, applicable, and crucial for understanding the country's present socio-economic situation. A brief description such as this cannot do justice to either the complexity of the subject or the reader who wishes to acquire a profound knowledge of the culture. It is hoped, however, that it will provide what is necessary to understanding the basic milieu.

Of course, the reality of life is one of constant flux and the clear sharp divisions we create are but tools for analysis and problem identification. In the end, the ambiguities and contradictions in human life are as much if not more "real" than life's clear and obvious divisions. To really understand,

one must try to grasp the whole in both its entirety and its individual parts. Women are needless to say part and parcel of it all. To anyone who honestly wishes to comprehend that whole for either Mauritania, or the human phenomenon in general, Melinda Smale's fine contribution is highly recommended.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of this study is to illuminate the effects of the 1970s-80 drought and of male migration on the condition of Mauritanian women, in order to indicate potential income-generating programs for women. The study was originally designed on the basis of several hypotheses. The first of these fundamental hypotheses was that drought and migration have caused unprecedented disruptions to Mauritanian society. A second was that women, through male migration, are either abandoned or become de facto heads-of-household. An ambiguous term, 'head-of-household' usually denotes the person who either financially sustains the household, manages the household, or both. Finally, the study assumed that Mauritanian women desire income-generating activities and that they and their problems can be presented under one common rubric.

During the course of the study we found instead that neither drought nor migration are peculiar to the Mauritania of the 1970s-80. On the contrary, specific regions of Mauritania have suffered cyclical droughts for centuries, and male migration is integral to both pastoral and sedentary production systems. Consequently, these societies have refined their social institutions to to conserve and protect their traditions through change. One of these traditions, which is found especially in the Toucouleur and Soninke societies, is patriarchal decision-making. While women cultivators of these societies may now be laboring more, decisions on use of remittances, agricultural investment, land transfers and sales are consistently made by males of the extended family. This result is less paradoxical given the continued flexibility of the extended family as both a political and productive unit.

There are also objective constraints to women becoming cash-earning, or even subsistence supporters of the family. One of these is the persistence of the use of slave labor in the Bidan/Haratin production system, which means that many Bidan women have few marketable skills and in some cases, minimal acquaintance with agricultural or herding labor and techniques. Another is that the low level of river system productivity implies that, excepting in the Guidimakha, there is no women's crop 'par excellence', and no single cash crop in general. The overriding problem facing all systems is declining yield, which presently inhibits both subsistence and cash production. While much is marketed, little can be sold and women are dependent on remittances, aid, and especially, usurious credit. In short, women's decision-making autonomy and

women's cash contribution to the household unit have not increased appreciably through male migration. The difficulty may lie in our overly simplistic arguments or understanding of the processes of household decision-making and budgeting.

By far the most salient difficulty, however, concerns the study's focus on income-generation, although income-generation, or production, is desperately needed for the economy as a whole. Work is generally considered by us to be desirable in and of itself, and also because it leads directly to the accumulation of money. Wealth in money is one basis of social status. Work, by association, provides status; work is a social goal. By contrast, some forms of labor, to a Bidan woman, are demeaning, and the fact that these forms of work are ignoble is more critical to her than the desire to be an independent producer. To the Peulh woman, certain types of work are degrading, and she may opt for support by men over streetvending. Other more refined work such as secretarial jobs is available to few of these women.

A related conceptual obstacle is that current measures of women's status, also culture-bound, resemble closely measures of modernity in women's participation. The urge is to ferret out indices of salaried employment percentages, representation and political voice in institutions, levels of education and fertility. In Mauritania, salaried employment is but a minute percentage of economic activity, literacy rates are generally very low, and representation and political voice are not currently a part of the national government prescription. Use of these indices alone would underestimate the power of most Mauritanian women and overestimate the token power of few. In addition, reliance on these meager indices in the formulation of policy may be dangerous because the implementation of these policies would serve only to articulate a methodological distortion.

In order to attempt to unravel concepts of women's status in Mauritania, the fundamental unit of analysis was chosen as the household production unit, or gallé, and camp. Basic literature on Bidan/Haratin and Peulh/Toucouleur, Wolof and Soninke societies was utilized, rather eclectically, to sketch women's contribution to the household production, the household division of labor, and her responsibilities to the household. These literature sources, in some ways outdated, provide us with a historical context in which to consider the rapid change and the social upheavals of today's Mauritania. Once again, the tendency to relate status to labor contribution is revealed in the

analysis. Nevertheless, the crucial differences between women in Mauritania emerge in this manner, as deriving from their varied productive roles in the household.

Against these simplistic prototypes are sketched certain changes in the broader Mauritanian economy that affect particularly the woman's position in her household. Women's responses to these changes also diverge considerably. The inferences and speculation of this section of the report follow closely the verbal information given to us by women interviewed in the river region, the Assaba, the Guidimakha and Nouakchott. Rather than use a questionnaire, the research assistants/translators engaged women in informal conversations, attempting to draw a silhouette portrait of each woman. Afterwards, we, as a team, discussed our findings, and drew general conclusions which were used as the basis for comparison between prototype and real-type.

The rudimentary tools with which I began the study - budget and labor hour calculations - proved unsatisfactory for several simple reasons. Our budget enumerations did not reveal fluctuations in revenue or the source of decision over revenue, and missed entirely certain expenditures and sources of income. They did reveal, instead, some information on familial organization of expenditures, such as, for example, the purchase of monthly staple rations by men and the purchase of sauces with daily allowances by women (Peulh/Toucouleur), or the absence of organization altogether (Bidan/Haratin). Budget organization, presumably, is the luxury of those families with constant sources of revenue.

Labor hour calculations, for the purpose of establishing a labor value, also proved superfluous. The value assigned to labor is usually defined as the opportunity cost of labor, or the cost of alternative labor foregone. The underlying assumption in calculating opportunity cost is opportunity, or, in this case, women's labor mobility. Rural women, in general, were found to be immobile, i.e., often unable to seek alternative labor. Therefore, we discussed with women their own perceptions of how their lives, and work load, had changed. Here we found, not so much that 'life is tougher,' but that women had already canvassed the available opportunities for increasing their income. As a result of their search, a new household division of labor is forming, although women's control over the products of their labor is evolving more slowly.

The scope of the study is limited to a very small area in Mauritania - the river region and selected sites in the Assaba and the Guidimakha. Findings are therefore specific to those regions and may not be generalized to the population as a whole. The Nouakchott interviews were conducted over a month's time with the help of four researchers/interpreters, two of whom spoke Pular and Wolof, and two of whom spoke Hassaniya. I translated their findings from French to English. The interviews in the interior of the country were the work of a team of interpreters and took place in two sets over a four-month period: two river trips and two Assaba trips (including a trip through the Guidimakha). Approximately 23 villages were visited. A trip to Dakar to interview Mauritanian migrants was organized by Dr. John Grayzel, who also provided considerable guidance in interpreting Mauritanian society throughout the study period.

Rather than strictly incorporate the data from the interviews in Nouakchott, I prefer to tabulate some of the responses and leave the interpretation to the reader since the sample was neither large enough nor controlled enough to disengage reliable relationships. The appendix includes some of the written reports from these interviews. The reader must also remember that responses followed two stages of translation and that they cannot always be accepted literally. For example, women, when questioned about marital problems and their capacity to decide on household matters, tend to respond with what they consider to be non-controversial, or acceptable, statements. Many responses must be recognized as more reflective of social norms than expressive of personal feelings. These responses do express women's perceptions of themselves and of the behavior prescribed by their society.

SUMMARY

The ethnic groups of Mauritania trace differing heritages and produce under distinctive economic systems. Ethnic identity in West Africa is often described as synonymous with occupation or productive activity; as, for example, the identification of 'Peulh' with 'herder' or 'free-cattle owner.' Although ethnicity by no means determines occupation, role or function in a production system and ethnic adherence are closely associated. In determining the role of women as income-earners in Mauritania, therefore, women are best characterized through both ethnic ascription and relevant production system.

The opening section of the report outlines the nomad/transhumant and sedentarized/transhumant, or Bidan and Peulh/Toucouleur production systems, with the intent of identifying women's contribution to the fundamental unit of production, or the camp and gallé, respectively. This section also includes comments on factors in the Soninke and Wolof systems which affect the position of women as household producers.

The term 'household' must be understood as distinct from 'domestic.' Household production includes those economic activities designed to support the extended family, as well as to satisfy community needs through certain specialized activities. 'Domestic' production pertains only to those women's duties which are focused on the maintenance of the household labor force and its reproduction: food preparation for home consumption, childcare, and household/utensil maintenance. 'Household' refers spatially to the extended family or encampment, while domestic corresponds to the concession or tent.

The Peulh and Toucouleur women are domestic producers and household producers. Further, they perform two sets of household production activities. In the first set of 'complementary' activities, women contribute to the production processes of grains cultivation and herding; they sow, guard, weed, harvest, transport and transform grains for household consumption or sale, or, in the case of the Peulh, tend weak and sick animals of the household herd. Since sale of quantities of grains and animals is the responsibility of men, women are remunerated indirectly for their labor in the production of these goods.

In the second set or 'secondary' activities, women, although they do not possess their own capital in land or herds, manage each stage of production, sell their proceeds, and dispose personally of their revenue. These activities consist of, for example, cultivating, women's vegetable production and herding, and women's milk and butter transformation. 'Secondary' activities, while providing

only a marginal cash revenue to the household unit as a whole, are the principal source of a woman's personal income, and her ability to produce in these activities is critical to her perception of self-worth and status among women. These revenues supply her with cash to purchase sauces, soap, and housewares, as well as clothes, jewelry and her daughter's dowry.

These two sets of activities are available to any Peulh or Toucouleur woman whose family possesses the requisite capital in land and livestock. In other words, they are not specific to a socio-occupational, or caste, group. Other activities are defined socio-occupationally, or by caste, and are customarily accomplished by specialized groups of the community. The artisans and griots are two such groups. Servile castes, by definition, provide menial and accessory labor throughout the range of activities.

This functional breakdown of women's work is useful only insomuch as it leads to an understanding of the concept of status, or of the ideal Peulh/Toucouleur woman, as status is reflective of economic contribution to society. The Peulh/Toucouleur women are major contributors to gallé production and domestic production while they are also sustainers of their own production. Accordingly, they are considered as laborers themselves as well as labor reproducers, and their community status as a whole is related to their labor potential. They also perceive of themselves as workers, and form mutual aid groups among themselves for the purpose of multiplying savings, augmenting revenues, and reinforcing their village standing.

The functional breakdown of activities, as reflected in this concept of status, also allows for speculation concerning the adaptability of these women to environmental and production system modifications. As a woman who moves from field to concession to marketing, cooperating closely in some tasks with men, the Peulh/Toucouleur prototype enjoys an awareness of many areas of activity and a close knowledge of several, and varied, occupations. She is accustomed to working with men, and working and socializing with women.

The Soninke woman is a self-proclaimed cultivator, and measures her own worth on the basis of her capacity to cultivate. While Soninke production segregates men's cultivating areas from women's, there is a complementarity between the two - men provide staples and women, sauces. Men and women work on each other's fields only rarely, although the production from both sets of fields may be combined in times of household scarcity. Soninke women work together not only to cultivate but also to save and invest in cultivation.

The Bidan woman varies by tribe and caste, but the underlying characteristic of her production system, which is a dependence on servile labor, is reflected in the limited scope of her activities. Noble women, whether Zawaya or Hassani, are preeminently managers and supervisors of tent and some camp labor performed by Haratin, Abid, Zenaga or artisan groups. The status of the Bidan woman is expressed by the degree of her inactivity, since inactivity demonstrates the wealth of her family in herds and in servile labor. Her workplace, the tent, is separated from the men's workplaces, which are the herd and long-distance commerce routes. Her immobility and isolation in her tent-centered world are reinforced by social prescriptions concerning her spiritual inferiority and inability to resist the 'evil eye'[1] or other malevolent forces existing beyond the confines of the tent. In the past, her physical immobility was guaranteed through the practice of force-feeding. The Hassani woman, freer in speech and behavior than the Zawaya, is nevertheless subjected to the same beliefs concerning women.

The capacity of these Bidan women to adapt to sedentarization is therefore inhibited by the fact that they are primarily domestic producers and labor reproducers in the camp. Their awareness and knowledge of productive activities is severely circumscribed. Servile women, relatively less confined, possess skills in livestock and agricultural production and product transformation, and are hindered, instead, by racial precepts implying their inferiority.

The second section reviews briefly the exogenous changes of the past years as these relate to selected changes within the production systems, and specifically, women's role in camp and gallé production. Neither drought nor migration are new to Mauritanian society, and each production system adapted, after its own fashion, to migration.

Following the pacification, commerce in Senegal attracted enlarging numbers of Bidan who established themselves as import-export retailers, livestock merchants and meat vendors. After independence, these Bidan became wholesalers and managers employing their own Haratin or servile Senegalese labor as menial laborers, butchers and meat vendors. Other Haratin remained on the oasis or at the camp in order to sustain camp economic activities. Noblewomen's position as tent managers, rather than laborers, scarcely changed. Migration of men became integral to the camp economy, which, in turn, influenced consumption habits. The frugality and the austerity of the ideal nomad and transhumant system ceded

[1] The 'mauvais oeil' describes the phenomenon whereby a penetrating glance by an ill-meaning person transmits misfortune, or maligns.

to material enrichment and visible wealth accumulation. The enrichment and material success of the Bidan merchant was enabled by his facility with credit arrangements. These arrangements, due to marketing discontinuities, were and are still the primary means of both small vendor and consumer purchase in the interior.

The migration of the Peulh and Toucouleur, also directed to the south, furnished the majority of monetary revenues for the average river household by the 1960s. Here, production was sustained by non-migrant males, servile laborers and women. Gradually, men ceased to return according to seasonal pattern. The Soninke migrated for even longer periods of time and generated social institutions reinforcing male migration to France. The thoroughbreds of Mauritanian migrants, these Soninke men are expected, in order to attain majority status, to migrate to France at the age of eighteen. Neither Peulh/Toucouleur nor Soninke women became managers of their households, since men arranged for the continuity in patriarchical decision-making through other men of the extended family. However, most women's rural income was devalued relative to men's urban wage-earning income. In other words, women's decision-making power altered little while their income-earning capacity declined.

The duration, direction and the composition of the migrant population shifted significantly following the drought. Prolonged outmigration and protracted drought weigh heavily on the adaptability of these systems, and conditions are aggravated by declining rural productivity, limited wage-employment opportunities, low purchasing power, and aid dependence. Market nodes are conglomerations of vendors competing in the sale of the undifferentiated products purchased from import-export licensed merchants on lines of credit. While these markets deliver imports, few local products are exported. In this market hierarchy, the Haratin women are the vendors of the lowest tier. Many Bidan families, suffering a severe psychological shock, physically dispossessed and unwilling to perform manual labor, find themselves entirely, and voluntarily, subsisting on charity.

Given these tremendous constraints, women respond differently according to the productive system of which they are a part. Freed Haratin and artisan Bidan women migrate in search of wage employment and marketing activities in urban areas and in Senegal. Haratin cultivators, predominantly sharecroppers, are beset by declining yields and marketing difficulties. Bidan women, recognizing the need to contribute to household revenues because of uncertain migrant remittances, engage in leatherworking and mat-making for sale. These activities

are far from remunerative, and are characteristically sporadic. The Bidan woman, as a result of her historically proscribed realm of activities, has few marketable skills and little knowledge of potential income-generating activities. Further, she is hindered in her pursuit by social stigmas against female work and mobility.

Peuhl/Toucouleur rural women also suffer from declining rural productivity, but have seized the opportunity of vegetable cultivation on small falo[1] fields in order to increase their revenues and their village political status. With the drought, falo fields have become more precious in terms of scarcity and economic return, to the advantage of families owning property rights to this land and to the disadvantage of women cultivating this land which may at any time be reappropriated by men, who possess succession rights. In areas where rice perimeters have been registered under men's names by SONADER, women labor the rice fields which produce the men's economic crop, while they cultivate nearby vegetable plots, with fewer inputs, no land security and a seasonal market for their produce. The Soninke women have responded to climatic change by altering their crop composition from groundnuts toward grains. These grains can be sold to meet their rising living costs, which neither men's remittances nor men's collective production sufficiently cover. Women's soap-making and cloth weaving have suffered from the decline in groundnut, myrobalan, cotton and indigo yields and the regional import of cheaper soap and cloth manufactures.

As a consequence of the importance of river women's labor to the river production systems, women remaining in the rural areas are often more heavily burdened. At the same time, because of declining profitability of their activities they are increasingly dependent on migrant remittances. Many leave the village, and finding little employment opportunity in town, opt for men's support through sexual favors. While threatening to their status in the village, this means of livelihood is, in the anonymity of the town, preferable to vending or menial labor. Other river women, accompanying their migrant husbands, abandon definitively the skills and knowledge in agriculture and livestock conferred them by their mothers.

In the urban environment, these river women are nevertheless comparatively well placed to continue income-generating activities. Although their husbands may require them to remain in the home or in petty commercial ventures in the city,

[1] falo refers to riverbank land, fondé to land located on the uppermost area of the riverbank, walo to the depression area bordering on the fondé, and dieri to the drylands extending beyond the walo.

the majority of these illiterate women conduct transformation and commercial activities from the home. Although few work in offices, most engage in two or three income-generating activities, and some locate jobs as domestic workers.

The keenness of these women for seeking out potential income-generating activities is reflected in their innovativeness within age-set groups. These have now broadened to encompass divorcee, unemployment, and family support, as well as savings for social events and investment in cloth, sewing machines and transport.

The Bidan and Haratin women interviewed in Nouakchott, by contrast, are not blessed with the same customs of work and savings association. Women of the same family or camp may coordinate efforts in mat and tent-making, but seldom organize efforts between families and camps. Consequently, many of the Bidan women arriving in Nouakchott are without informal community support. Further, the acceptability code is more profound for Bidan women, who are discouraged from working in public and alongside men.

The exception to this portrait is represented by the wealthier Bidan merchants, who specialize in precious metals, cloth and cosmetics trade which carries them from Nouakchott to Dakar, Las Palmas, Marseille and Mecca. Although the stalls in Nouakchott are open, much of these women's trade is accomplished with a select clientele in the home, around tea, and 'invisibly.' Moreover, this luxury trade is open to few women because of the capital investment required, and is profitable to even fewer because of the nature of the luxury product.

The urban condition also affects the relationships of men and women and marital institutions, such as endogamy, polygamy, and divorce. The new economic insecurity of urban women sometimes surfaces in distrust of their husbands. Peuhl/Toucouleur and Wolof women complain that they work for their household only to find their savings added to their husband's and used in paying the brideprice for a second wife. They recount that the second, or 'chosen' wife (as opposed to the first, or 'promised' wife), receives more material support. Although there has never been conclusive protection by law of women's rights

upon divorce,[1] the urban environment now separates the woman from the extended family, the customary mitigator of marital disputes. These problems, inherent to river society marital institutions, are accentuated by the the geographical and financial parcelling of the extended family into rural-subsistence and urban wage-earning counterparts.

The Bidan woman, arriving with few skills, few acceptable work opportunities, and few community support networks outside her family, is often reduced to complete dependence on men as a source of material support. Consequently, brideprice is now both monetarized and exorbitant, while marriages are successive and instable. For the poorer of these women, even the brideprice is an unreliable and minimal source of support. Haratin women complain of abandonment once a small brideprice has been paid, or of men who neglected to provide housing for a 'wife.'[2]

The third section asserts that, since the beginning of the 1970s-80s drought, the government has attempted to address the needs of the rural and urban population largely through the extension of food and medical services. Women have been addressed as part of a services recipient population. Investment in women's production has been limited to the establishment of women's educational centers, for the promotion of sewing and some artisan skills, and the encouragement of traditional artisan production through government-subsidized rug-weaving centers. The rug centers are oriented more toward conservation of traditional artisan forms than toward promotion of large-scale rug production and marketing. The women's educational centers, suffering from both lack of material support and a formulated program design, generally attract meager support in rural areas. Overall, few government or donor efforts have been made to encourage women as agricultural or herding-related producers.

---

[1] Robin Geller's research on the effect of legal reform on marital institutions in Senegal suggests that the imposition of the concept of the nuclear family, as articulated in the marriage of individuals rather than the marriage alliance of lineages (doctoral dissertation, Columbia University), modifies the ability of spouses to mediate marital problems and property disputes. These issues, once separated from the extended family jurisdiction, must be treated in civil court. The backlog of cases in civil courts and the delicacy of the issues may preempt arbitration and cause the parties to abandon this channel altogether. The efficacy of instituting legal reforms, when the legal concept itself is alien to the society, is questionable.

[2] Generally, a man is required to furnish housing for his wife upon marriage.

Paradoxically, women are the full-time residents of rural areas because of economic pressures for male outmigration. In the river areas especially and among the Haratin of the Assaba, women and children comprise the permanent agricultural and household livestock production force. The slow gestation period of existing agricultural projects and the range of urban and international wage opportunities open to male migrants imply that for some time to come, the potential labor force in rural areas will continue to be female and child. For this reason, and in order to relieve credit distortions resulting from dependence on migrant remittances and women's low cash-earning capacity in rural areas, donors and government must address women as viable rural producers.

While the investment necessary to dynamize the rural areas is great, donors may immediately consider a set of general actions designed to increase the income from women's production. These include: 1) assuring land security, or plots, to women, as well as inputs delivery (seeds, fertilizers, tools, and in some cases wells or pump use) to producing areas; 2) in the river area and among Assaba pre-cooperatives, investigate and revise the current vegetable crop promotion efforts in favor of indigenous or other crops which can be staggred over a longer seasonal duration, can be easily stored or dried, and which have a larger local market than the European vegetables currently being produced; 3) in these same areas, attempt to utilize the savings and investment associations of women to expand and regulate marketing and transport aspects of production, through subsidizing the associations, providing full-time, and preferably female and male monitors, or short-term local training in accounting marketing, or small enterprise to interested rural groups; 4) in the Guidimakha region, including women producers in both vegetable and legumes/grains crop experimentation and demonstration; 5) in Assaba, river and Guidimakha areas, promote the raising and improved tending of household animals in order to utilize especially Peulh and Bidan women's knowledge of household livestock and assure consistent household supplies of livestock products for consumption and sale; and, 6) in these areas, explore use of forestry by-products by women and introduce, in their households, seedlings with potential use as sauce and food sources or for by-product sales.

In Nouakchott and other urban areas, such as Boghé, Kiffa and Selibaby, both small ruminants production and fruit tree and garden plot production in concessions is feasible. In Nouakchott especially, women need this set of activities which are no longer available to them when relocated in the urban environment. River women's associations are the obvious base for such small community actions.

Bidan and Haratin women, who do not tend toward similar mutual savings and investment associations, express considerable interest in refining accounting marketing and small enterprise skills. Home-managed schools and a tradition of female Koranic educators already exist. Short-term adult education courses may be organized similarly in the home and with the help of local expertise. In this way, the traditional home school may be revalued or transformed to encompass a new set of adult women's needs through existing talent.

Women in general express the desire to become valued (in terms of wage) domestic workers, or technically approved and better paid child and home care workers. Currently, domestic work is one of the few and cherished employment opportunities available to Nouakchott women. Other women are unable to work because of childcare responsibilities. This form of technical training, as well as extension training in specific agricultural, and livestock production and marketing skills, may be incorporated into a revised and expanded ENECOFA curriculum.

TABLE 1. Classification of Mauritanian Women's Activities in Rural Areas by Destination of Product and Remuneration of Labor

ACTIVITIES	DESTINATION OF PRODUCTS	REMUNERATION OF LABOR
Domestic -Cooking -Cleaning of concession/tent -Cleaning of cookware -Childcare and non-formal education -Receiving guests -Primary health care	-Maintenance and reproduction of household labor force; physical maintenance of tent or house	Indirect; provision of house or tent by men
Household (Complementary) -Sowing, weeding, harvesting family grains fields -Pounding grains -Tending weak, sick, concession/tent animals -Transporting fish to market -Gathering and pounding fruits and leaves	-Household granaries or sales by men -Household cereals supply or exchange, in small quantities, by women for milk -Household milk supply, exceptional sales by women or men at holidays -Market sales by women for household provisions -Sauces and medicines preparation for household	Indirect; provision of house or tent and staple food by men
Household (Secondary) -Melon/cowpea production on lent fields -Cotton, indigo, okra, rice production on lent fields -Vegetable production on lent fields -Milk, butter, fats, tanning of skins -Gathering and pounding fruits or leaves	-Market or local exchange for some household consumption goods and purchase of jewelry, clothes, dowry, animals	Direct; provision by women for women of personal goods

SECTION I. PROTOTYPES: WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION UNIT BY ETHNIC GROUP

A. The Productive Activities of Women within the Sedentarized Toucouleur and Semi-Sedentarized Peulh Production Systems

A.1.a Toucouleur Social Structure and Organization of Production

The term most commonly employed to characterize Fouta social differtiations is 'caste;' the membership of which is determined by heredity, dogamy and economic specialization (Diop, p 23). Accordingly, 1) each individual of the Fouta greater society is by birth a member of a certain caste which is the same as that of his or her father; 2) marriage is decided and enacted, by preference, within the caste,[1] and 3) membership of a given caste is defined, ideally, by the profession of which the caste has a quasi-monopoly.[2] (PUF, p 53)

The use of caste terminology is misleading in that it disguises the more basic distinction in the river production system, which is owning and non-owning of land or animals, or an opposition based on property rights. The term 'noble' is often employed interchangeably with 'free' and 'servile' with 'unfree.' At the same time, fishermen (subalbe) are considered 'free' although they are not 'noble,' and artisans are free to change clients but are nevertheless considered dependent on noble families.

By strictly occupational definition, herding and agricultural activities are uncasted in the sense that they may be practiced by any member of the community possessing animals or land title through inheritance, purchase, rental or exploitation rights. This deviation from rigid occupational specialization has been explained by the existence of a low technological level throughout the region, which leads to both the generalized access to simple means of production (land, livestock) and to the critical importance of family self-sufficiency

---

[1] Notable exceptions occur among artisan castes and between 'free' Peulh and the 'noble' Fouta castes, or rather, free cattle-owning and free land-owning families (PUF, p 78): "Dans la mesure où les castes appartenant à une même catégorie sont matrimonialement compatibles, elles sont exogames chacune par rapport à l'autre, mais endogames considérées du point de vue de la catégorie qui les englobe."

[2] Over the past thirty years, or especially since pacification, these rigid occupational structures have dissolved considerably, whereas ascription to these castes is still marked in personal conversation, and certain social practices such as marriages. In other words, while the occupational basis of the caste distinction may have eroded or altered, caste distinction as reflecting lineage, community status and respectability persists.

in basic foodstuffs.[1] The specialization of production evolves through exchange of goods. As a means of diversifying risk, the producer varies his production according to potential supply and demand conditions for his own and substitute products. In an economy beset by radically fluctuating supply conditions due to climatic occurences, and by unsteady market conditions due to the isolation and localization of production, the producer will naturally diversify his production possibilities in order to assure the unit's consumption. While certain activities such as herding and agricultural activities are not confined to a particular occupational group, the degree of specialization in these activities, the techniques of production and the accumulation of capital for that production are nevertheless differentiated among groups.

The fundamental production unit of the river system is the household, gallé or foyré, composed of the immediate members of the family, whose land and housing capital is owned by the husband and father (dyom gallé). The household is identified as part of the wider extended family or gallé, through which both immobile capital are distributed and fruits of production regulated among households, under the administrative decision of the dyom mawdo or senior male. The gallé is the economic unit of the society in that it is the distributing mechanism of capital through inheritance rights, means of production through seniority rights, and goods through collective need; it is the administrative organ of the society in that decisions are elaborated here for the households of the family as a whole pertaining to organization of production, procurement of goods, education of children, marriage alliances and care of old and infirm. Further, the dyom mawdo is the public representative of the family, or that fraction of the lineage represented in the village.[2]

---

[1] "Son économie est démeurée dans un archaisme traditionnel ...Nous sommes en Fouta en présence d'une économie de subsistence ...L'importance de l'autoconsommation ...La Vallée n'a pas connu l'introduction des cultures d'exportation ...Presque toute est consitutée par le secteur primaire: agriculture, pêche et l'élevage." (PUF, p 53, also Diop, p 35-36)

[2] This classification of foyré and gallé is in many ways simplistic and anachronistic. The strict functional division of foyré and gallé has eroded over time through the breaking and reestablishment of households. The foyré is now often indistinguishable from the gallé. There is a spatial criterion fundamental to the classic definition of these terms, requiring contiguity of production and localization of circulation of goods. Through migration and reestablishment of households this spatial criterion, for example, has dissolved. Further, increasing monetarization has eliminated the need for strict specialization by household and regulation of circulation of goods, or extended family sufficiency in basic foodstuffs. Nevertheless, the social value of the gallé remains great as pertains to marriage, social welfare and education of children, and regardless of the effects of production changes, out-migration, and relocation.

The authority of the dyom mawdo over landholding and distribution of goods within the family is limited by certain immutable rules guarding the indivisibility of gallé land: land is inalienable from the family as a whole and in this sense, is 'owned' by the collectivity.[1] The dyom mawdo is in this sense the trustee of the extended family common property.

Reflecting the strict functional organization of production around the extended family is a rigid hierarchization of decision-making within the extended family, based on the criteria of sex and age. The gallé decision-making system is both patrilineal and patrilocal: the ideal woman is both obedient and subordinate to the dyom gallé, and the dyom gallé to the dyom mawdo. Neither of these axioms denies the influence of women or younger males within the gallé, but rather, both suggest that nominal decision-making power resides in a sex and age qualification.

This hierarchy based on the supereminence of age translates into age-set groups which are both social and economic associations. The age-set is further subdivided into parallel associations for males and females, these following the same basic organization. The age-set group traverses caste categories in that the only criteria for membership is age. However, the putative leadership role is generally filled by a torodo individual, the adjoint position is likewise held by a torodo, and the publicity office is appropriately filled by a nyenyo or griot. The age-sets (pelle or fedde) serve as work groups for the village and as mutual aid societies in the organization of nuptial ceremonies. These associations reinforce the domination of seniority through the elaboration of specific age-related functions, whereas they counterbalance the domination of caste by lending a character of complementarity, or sisterhood/brotherhood to the community. Further, there is often student competition among age-sets in the village and among villages, as is tremendous pressure placed on the individual to ascribe to the values of his/her peers (Diop, p 28).

The productive activities of women within this general socio-economic structure are therefore determined by several interrelated variables, including 1) caste ascription, 2) age-set adherence, 3) foyré decision-making norms, and/or

---

[1] Wane, p 170: "Cette prépondérance du chef de famille en matière de la propriété avait certaines limites. Il ne pouvait aliéner la plus infime partie des biens familiaux, soumis au régime de l'indivision, et il n'était pas davantage en mesure de déshériter un quelconque membre du groupe à cause des règles immuables de transmission du patrimoine."

4) gallé decision-making norms. Consequently, the skills possessed by Toucouleur women and the access these women have to capital, means of production, and decisions regarding production vary tremendously. Common to all women are the set of domestic duties which include food preparation, those chores necessary for this preparation (fetching of fuel and water, maintenance of utensils), and the maintenance of the household productive force, or education and health care of children. These tasks are distributed among the women of the household or gallé, according to physical capabilities, age, and the number of active women included in the family.[1] Designed for the maintenance of the household, they are not directly remunerated, although they comprise a labor cost. Women also perform directly and indirectly remunerative activities for household and community consumption. These activities can be discussed through caste or socio-occupational categories.

TABLE 2. A Simplified Classification of Fouta Social Structure by Title, Occupation and Marital Determinants

CASTE	TITLE	OCCUPATION	MARITAL NORM
Rimbe	Toroobe	Primarily cultivators, although all are considered 'noble;' few trace their lineage to founding families and there is much differentiation in terms of property ownership	Exogamous for men, preferably endogamous for women
	Dyawambe	Courtesans, counselors, seers serving noble lineages; marabouts	
	Sebbe	Historical ethnic appartenance controversial, possibly Peulh warrior descendants; agriculturalists and herders	
	Subalbe	Properties of river and riverbanks, monopoly of 'falo' and fishing rights	Endogamous
Nyeenbe	Griots & Artisans	Praise-singers, genealogists, musicians, weavers, blacksmiths, jewelers, woodcarvers, boat-makers, leatherworkers	Endogamous
Dyabe (Matiube)	Captives & freed captives	Serfs and servants, laborers, tenants and household workers	Endogamous

Diop: The tableau serves merely as a static guide. Numerous titles are included within the castes and there is both occupational and marital fluidity affecting applicability of this classification system.

[1] i.e., mothers preparing meals and cleaning the concession; girls sweeping, carrying wood/water, or fetching utensils; older women watching the children or repairing utensils. (Ex: interview with torodo in Kuebb, Nouakchott, 26 June 1980: "Elle aidait sa mère dans les travaux ménagers, et dès l'âge de 15 ans elle a commencé à préparer le déjeuner pour les hommes qui sont aux champs et chaque midi elle l'amenait aux champs. Pendant la saison de la récolte, elle aidait aussi son père à recolter."

A.1.b Uncasted Occupations: Cropping, Gathering and Herding Activities

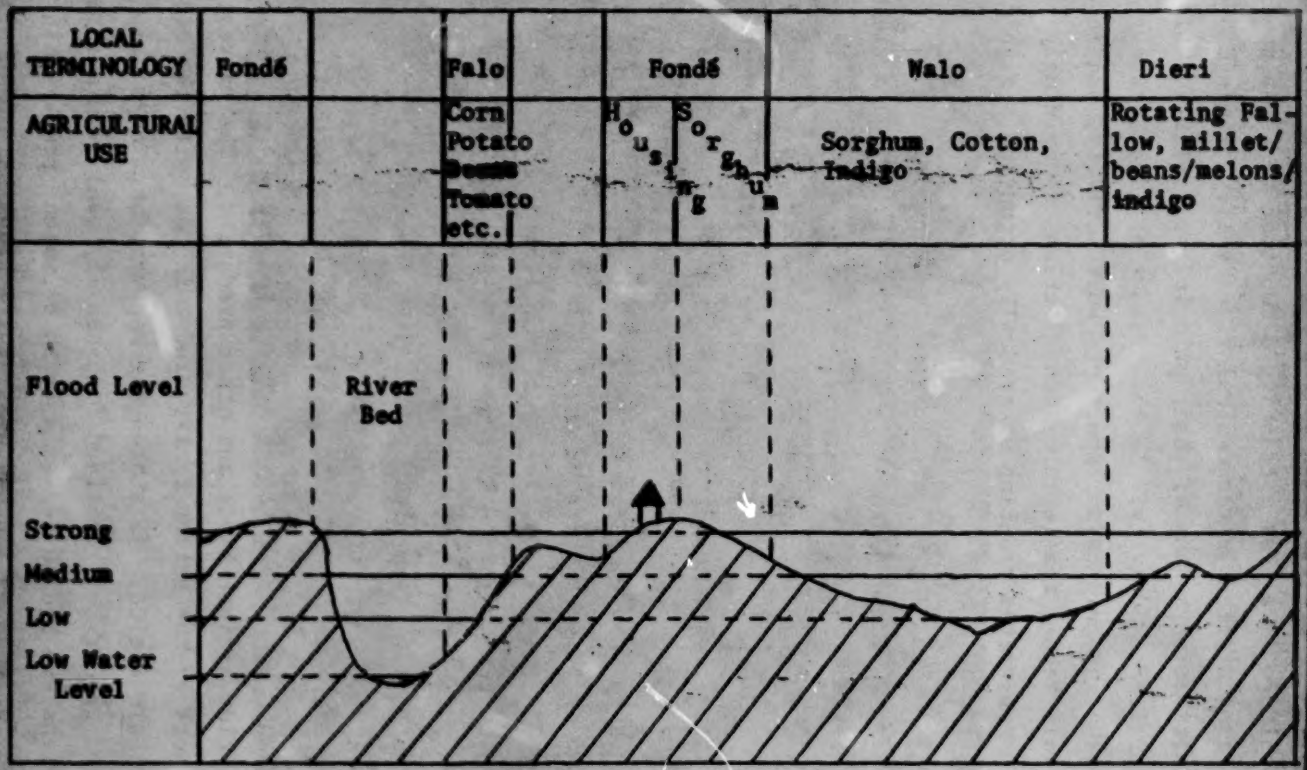
A.1.b(1) Cropping Activities

Both Toucouleur and Peulh women of the river region practice cultivation, although agriculture is a less attractive occupation to Peulh women. Among the Peulh villages visited in the central river valley, women did not tend to enumerate cultivation as one of their principal activities. Livestock, by inference, is a preferred activity. In the absence of livestock, or as a risk deterrent, cultivation becomes an important Peulh activity, and involving, in the scarcity of male labor, female labor contribution. Accordingly, the PUF study of the 1960s demonstrates cropping as gradually occupying a significant portion of Peulh yearly labor.

Cultivation methods in the river region are constrained by: 1) irregularity of rainfall, and 2) limited arable land under existing cultivation techniques. Crop production is staggered seasonally and spatially over major soil types (dieri, walo, falo) and subtypes, such as those found in depressions or marigots. Under ideal climatic conditions, the dieri (dryland) is cultivated following the first rains. Previous to the rains, men clear the fields and construct thorny field enclosures, while women, if no male labor is available, mend roofs of houses in preparation for the rains. The millet/sorghum and niebe are sown by two or three members of the family. The man breaks the ground, a woman or child sows, and another member follows, covering the seed with soil.[1] Throughout the following two months' rains, men weed the millet and niebe fields and women often tend melon or squash fields lent to them for use by the men of the family. Women may also aid in the weeding of the millet niebe fields, which is the most labor-intensive production phase. As the grain crop matures, men depart for preparation of the walo (floodland) fields located between the drylands and the riverbank. Women and children, specifically, guard the dryland fields against birds and other predators. The harvest on the dieri requires the work of the entire family, and coincides with the clearing and planting of the walo fields. If stored for consumption, women help transport the yield to the granary; if destined for sale (by men), women thresh and bag the grains. Melons and squash are sold fresh by women, prepared in food, or their seeds dried for consumption and next year's planting.

[1] There is no precise rule for this division of labor, which depends on total availability of household labor. One individual can feasibly sow the dieri.

VISUAL AID 1. Profile of Land Bordering the River



SOURCE: la Moyenne Vallée du Sénégal

Women contribute in a similar manner to walo grains production, although more labor is required for planting recession soils. In some areas, women are lent fields for their own production of cotton and indigo. As on the dieri lands, men often help with heavy clearing or enclosing on women's fields. Following the walo harvest and river recession, the fondé and falo fields are cultivated under grains, maize, and various vegetables. The falo production, and especially vegetable production, is most generally the responsibility of women and children since 1) it occurs following the rainy season when many men migrate for labor, and 2) it requires daily tending and watering.

The composition of this crop varies among areas and has changed over time, today including potatos, carrots, turnips, manioc, European (green) and niebe beans, tomatos and bissap plant. Until recently, these plots were exploited for the purpose of preparing sauces rather than for cash sale. Most women interviewed along the river described a previous diet composed primarily of grains, milk and meat, implying that their cultivating activities were largely confined to contribution to grains production and alongside, some cotton, indigo, squash and cowpeas production.

Apparently, grain production for home consumption and sale was (and still is) primarily the domain of men, while melon, cotton/indigo and some vegetable production for primarily home consumption and some sale is the domain of women. Use of labor in cultivation is not organized by sex; men and women contribute to each other's field production depending on their needs and the availability of labor. Fields are not cultivated in common, either among men or among women, although both men and women may help each other (PUF, p 67), if necessary. Cultivation is neither specialized to a caste,[1] nor crop or task specialized to a sex, as in other regions of West Africa. Table 3 indicates a pre-drought average of labor days contributed by men, women and children on dieri and walo fields. The figures do not include labor hours devoted to those crops cited specifically by women in interviews, such as 1) vegetable crops (falo), 2) gourd, melon, squash fields (dieri/walo), 3) cotton and indigo crops (dieri/walo), and 4) concession fruit trees/bushes. Consequently, they underestimate women's total cultivation labor.[2]

---

[1] PUF, p 67: Cultivation, No. of Workdays/Week by Caste: Torodo - 4.7; Sebbe - 4.7; Subalbe - 5.9; Artisan - 6.5; Matiube - 5.0 ; Average - 5.7

[2] Note also the significance of children's labor in field production, a factor most often overlooked and therefore undervalued.

TABLE 3. Cultivation Labor Days per Hectare on Dieri and Walo Plots, by Family Member

MEMBER	CULTIVATION PHASE							TOTAL CULTIVATION WORK: WORK DAYS/YEAR[2]
	PLANTING	WEEDING	ENCLOSURE	GUARDING	HARVEST/TRANSPORT		TOTAL	
DIERI								
Men	2.9	25.3	0.5	8.5	2.8[1]	2.5	42.5	Men: 153
Women	1.0	2.3[3]	-	6.7	3.9	2.4	16.3	
Boys	0.3	4.3	-	4.1	0.3	0.5	9.5	Women: 57
Girls	0.1	-	-	0.9	0.7	0.4	2.1	
Subtotal	4.3	31.9	0.5	20.2	7.7	5.8	70.4	Boys (8-14): 97
WALO								Girls (8-14): 80
Men	5.8	14.8	0.3	15.9	2.3	0.5	39.9	
Women	3.2	-	-	13.0	0.9	0.7[3]	17.8	
Boys	1.4	5.6	-	10.3	0.5	-	17.8	
Girls	0.7	-	-	8.6	1.0	-	10.3	
Subtotal	11.1	20.4	0.3	47.8	4.7	1.2	85.5	

SOURCE: PUF, p 109-111

[1] This may express the division of labor during bottleneck periods; note little female activity on walo at this point (weeding, enclosure on walo).

[2] Figures do not include preparation of grain for storage or consumption, falo/fondé production, or women's walo or dieri crop cultivation.

[3] Walo fields are generally less distant from concession than dieri.

A.1.b(2) Gathering Activities

As a general rule, it is the responsibility of the women of the household to furnish ingredients for the sauce of dishes, prepared from vegetables, wild plants, fruits and leaves. When these cannot be obtained directly through her cultivation or gathering, she may barter or sell her handiwork, pounded grain or soured milk, in order to procure the ingredients.

Previous to the drought, these sauces were largely prepared from locally gathered products, except during the vegetable production season,[1] when fresh vegetables were available for condiments. Table 4 includes some of the fruits and leaves used as condiments in household cooking in the river region. Under altered climatic conditions, the majority of these fruits and leaves have now become scarce. Some of them, such as oulo and gidile, grow in the dieri depressions; others, such as bissap, are grown in concessions or in gardens.

TABLE 4. Some Fruits and Leaves Cited for Use as Condiments and in Tanning in River Region

POPULAR OR LOCAL NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	CITED USES
Baobab pain-de-singe, also lalo (P)	Adansomia digitata	Pulp, seeds and fruits edible leaves used in sauces; fruits in drinks; seeds good for compost (rich in potash, phosphates)
Lalo (P) also	Corchorus olitorius	Medicinal, sauce, good fodder for small livestock/camels
Oulo (P)		Grows spontaneously in inundation areas; used in sauces
Sambara (B) African locust bean, sometimes oul, ouli (W)	Cassia arereh	Spice and tanning
Bissap*	Hibiscus Sabdariffa Hibiscus asper	Leaves used in sauces; anti-malarial; flower used in drink, also medicinal
Tamarin	Tamarina indica	Pulp, seed edible, medicinal, used also as cure-dents (toothbrushes)
Myrobalan soumpe (W)	Balanites aegyptiacus	Soap-making; oil, kernels have food value, used also as cure-dents
Citrouille courge	Cucurbita pepo and Maxima	Miniature fruits used in sauces; leaves and shoots also edible
Mango*	Irringia gabonensis or mangifera	Fruit

[1] Interviews, River Region, 23-31 July 1980

TABLE 4 - CONTINUED

POPULAR OR LOCAL NAME	BOTANICAL NAME BOTANICAL NAME	CITED USES
Citron*	C. aurantifolia or aurantium	Fruit
Pastèques* (F) melons	Citrullus vulgaris	Fruit used in sauces, also pulverized seeds
Parsley* persil (F)		Spice
Menthe* (F) nana (H)		Tea
Djagueri (P)		Sauces
Henné* (F)	Lythraceae inermis	Medicinal, ornamental
Jujube (jubbe-jubbe?)	Ziziphus Mauritiaca	Fruit
Salahaa (H) gonakie	Acacia arabica, acacia nilotica, esp.	Leaves, bark, pods for astringent; tanning (up to 45 percent tannin); building; original gum tree
Gombo* okra gumbo	Hibiscus esculentus	Sauces
Tamât (H) gum	Acacia seyal	Leaves good as forage
Kinkeliba quinqueliba	Combretum micranthum	Leaf and root used in medicine and as drink
gidile (P)		Sauces

H - Hassaniya; P - Pulaar; B - Bambara; F - French; W - Wolof

*already grown domestically

SOURCE: Interviews and Dalziel's Useful Plants of West Tropical Africa, London 1937

A.1.b(3) Herding Activities

Like cultivation and gathering activities, livestock-related activities are not caste-exclusive, although they are, as derived from herding, found preeminently among the Peulh of the valley. The Peulh possess the greater knowledge and range of techniques for livestock raising and production preparation. As livestock is not only a means of subsistence but also a means of social status among the Peulh, the use and circulation of livestock and livestock products differs from that of sedentary herd-owning Toucouleurs.

Historically, the Toucouleur entrusted their cattle herds to Peulh during the dry season and in turn, the Peulh grazed their herds and fertilized the soil of Toucouleur fields following the harvest. Toucouleur women exchanged their abundant product, millet, for the abundant product of the Peulh women, milk. Now that the Toucouleur have acquired greater numbers of household (small ruminant) livestock as a risk-deterrent providing meat and milk for consumption, fertilizer for cultivation, and market exchange, Peulh-exclusivity of these activities has diminished. Livestock, under a non-monetarized brideprice, constitute the dowry conferred to the bride for both Toucouleur and Peulh.[1]

The composition of herds among the Toucouleur, however, leans toward the animals requiring less intensive care and less extensive herding, or goats and sheep. These have a higher rate of reproduction than cattle and are easier to sell under exceptional conditions. Some of these are kept in the concession and are guarded, fed and milked by women. Often, in case of sickness or birthing, the Toucouleur request the care of a Peulh. These concession animals do not generally provide sufficient milk to sell the product. The remainder of the Toucouleur herd may still be entrusted to Peulh shepherds for pasturing as well as for long-distance sales.

During the dry season, Peulh women often accompany their husbands in transhumance, and are charged with the management of food provisions,[2] household utensils, and care of young or sick animals. They may sell milk, soured milk and butter to supplement the needs of the moving household. Some women remain in the village with other family members, cultivating grains and cowpeas and tending animals too weak to be herded and those animals necessary for concession subsistence. The Peulh women consider themselves experts in the care of animals and in birthing,[3] and often men divide the herd among wives, each managing a certain number of head.[4]

---

[1]According to Fikry, Peulh pre-Islamic tradition deprived women of their livestock dowry in divorce or widowing, yet this practice underwent a readaptation with the introduction of Islamic law providing for female inheritance of livestock upon husband's death. (p 33, RAMS, unofficial document)

[2]Often the herders are paid in kind with foodstocks by those owning the herd entrusted to them.

[3]Oulyinge, 24 August 1980

[4]Dividing herds is a way of reducing one's perceptible wealth and also a way of managing large herds more effectively.

Aside from the knowledge of care of cattle, goats and sheep, which is shared by men and women, the focus of men's and women's activities differ: "It is for the men that cattle are the quintessence of life - for the women the quintessence of life is milk." (Grayzel, dissertation, p 83) While women contribute to herding activities, their specific tasks, as for the cultivating Toucouleur, involve the preparation of the product, or milk, soured milk and butter. These are also a critical income source, as the melon and vegetable fields and millet pounding are for the Toucouleur:[1]

> "A husband is responsible for providing his wife with a house, a bed, and food. For her other expenditures, such as cloth, jewelry, calabashes, etc., she is fundamentally on her own. ... It is through her sale of milk that much of the necessary revenue is obtained." (Grayzel, op.cit.)

Both Peulh and Toucouleur women may sell tanned leather and skins, although among the Toucouleur, only artisan castes fabricate leather goods. Skins are tanned by various lengthy processes, usually requiring days soaking in a mixture of ash and tannin-containing pods or bark (from trees and local bushes) to loosen the hair, and continued soaking for softening. Among the Toucouleur, the skin is given to an artisan who is paid a minimal fee for fabrication, and the product is then sold on completion by the provider of the leather.[2]

A.1.c Casted Occupations

A.1.c(1) Fishing

Although subalbe (fishing families) occasionally own or rent dieri/walo fields, the major focus of their activities is the river and riverbank (falo) fields over which they hold an imperfect monopoly of exploitation. As with agricultural production, river exploitation is organized through the family production unit. The male subalbe, unlike the cultivators among the Toucouleur, work collectively under the dyom gallé or owner of the pirogue.

The proceeds of the family catch are distributed in kind: one part to the owner of the boat, one part to the owner of the motor, one part to the owner of the net, and the remainder divided among the fishermen. Those parts allocated to the boat, net and motor pay for the repair and maintenance of the fishermen's capital investment,[3] and those parts of the catch distributed to the fishermen represent a wage-in-kind. (Soumah, Nouakchott, 24 July 1980)

---

[1] Danguerémou, August 1980

[2] Ceddo woman, Theynil, 26 July 1980

[3] Usually, men repair boats, motors and nets, although we interviewed some women who repair nets.

The women of each household of the family are responsible for the transport, preparation and sale of the fish, once it has been distributed to the household. With the revenues from their sales, women purchase household necessities. In principle, the balance of their revenues is ceded to their husbands[1] to be saved by them for the purchase of a pirogue (boat). Once owning his own pirogue, her husband can establish an independent fishing business.

Fish that cannot be sold fresh are dried. Dried fish, used in smaller quantities than fresh in the preparation of the staple dish (Thiembaudjien), is an inferior good, and its market is the residual of the fresh fish market. At a given time at the market place, dried fish may be sold at a lower price than fresh fish.[2] Apparently, there is zero or negative labor value added in fish drying and little incentive for improved drying under given consumer taste considerations. Along the river, fish is dried without technology, and usually at home in an area as free from flies and insects as possible. Neither salting nor smoking are currently widespread among the river subalbe.

Any member of the village may fish individually, and women and children often fish, if time permits, to complement the daily diet. However, the subalbe are the only caste permitted to exploit the river with pirogue and single river net. The subalbe are also reputed to be especially knowledgeable of river spirits. This expertise is passed from generation to generation by the men and women elders of the family.[3] Before any non-subalbe enters the river, permission is sought of the subalbe.

---

[1] An exception to this principle was found in a migrant fishing family in Nouakchott, where women bought fish from their husbands. After sale, their profits were combined for the purchase of household necessities and the women's personal savings. (Dieo, 3 July 1980, Nouakchott: "Toutes les femmes (quatre) sont vendeuses de poissons et chacune fait son tour de rester à la maison pour faire la cuisine. Elles achètent le poisson à la plage. Même si c'est avec leur mari elles doivent payer parce que le revenue est uniquement pour elles. Elles vendent chacune de son côté.")

[2] Boghé Eskale Market, July 1980: dried fish - 40 UM/kg; fresh river fish - 50-60 UM/kg; Nouakchott ocean fish - 40 UM/kg.

[3] Interview with M'Bagne thioubalo, Keubb, Nouakchott: "Sa grand-mère, une savante très connu au village, étant Thiobalo, race spécialisée dans le domaine des eaux, ils ont des connaissances qui leur permettent de s'aventurer n'importe comment et quand dans les mers et les fleuves. Ainsi sa grand-mère soulage ceux qui ont imprudemment avalé des arrêtés des poissons et qui se trouvent en danger de mort, ou ceux qui sont attaqués par les esprits des eaux, ce qui fait la renommée de sa famille, sa mère aussi détient des connaisssances mais elle ne peut les pratiquer tant que sa grand-mère n'est pas décédée."

A.1.c(2) Griote Occupations

The griots as a group have various singing or instrumental expertise (tambarine playing, guitar-playing, singing), and typically, are attached individually to a noble family for whom they are the chroniclers, geneologists and festival entertainers. In the past, griots accompanied cultivators to the field, inciting them to work, and receiving a portion of the harvest in the form of tribute. While the griots are not considered 'noble,' the nature of their marketable profession implies that they are 'free.'[1] The griote is not paid a salary, but rather, her clients offer a tribute in kind or money as an expression of appreciation.[2]

The family is also in some measure responsible for the griote's well-being - in part through respect and in part through fear of the notorious power of the griote to alter their fortune under ridicule or praise. The griote may occasionally request material support from her clientele. A Mataam griote recounts that sometimes the monthly rations for the family are exhausted before the close of the month, as well as the sum for daily expenses." She, "being griote, assures the supply through the end of the month by finding her torobe and fulbe (Peulhs) in order to request their support.[3]

Other artisan groups may join the griots during grand ceremonies. The griote community has a well-knit organization for publicity and mutual aid purposes. Usually, a lead singer is responsible for the choice of songs and music, a publicity officer is charged with informing the group of ceremonies, and a manager is appointed for the distribution of the performance tribute. A portion of the gifts is set aside for the instruments and a portion may be set aside for security purposes, to help newly arrived griots establish themselves or to loan to griots in difficult financial conditions.[4]

---

[1] The above griote is migratory, and expressed a preference for the urban entertainment market over her previous village situation. Her profession allows her to choose her employment location at the same time that she profits from old family ties.

[2] Mataam griote, 16 June 1980: "C'est en quelque sorte une profession, mais il n'exige pas de salaire. Elles chantent et dansent à l'honneur de celui qui donne la fête. Au retour, elles reçoivent des habits, de l'argent et parfois même des bijoux."

[3] Mataam migrant griote, 16 June 1980: "Cependant il arrive que la ration s'épuise avant la fin du mois ainsi que la somme pour la dépense journalière. Etant griote, elle assure la fin du mois.....Elle trouve ses torobe, fulbe, etc., pour leur demander de l'aide."

[4] 16 June 1980: Another migrant griote has travelled through Senegal and Mauritania, and in each new place established hereself with the griote community where she is received and supported until her clientele enlarges.

A.1.c(3) Artisan Occupations

The craftswomen also work on a clientele basis, and are also 'free' in the sense that, possessing a generally demanded skill, they may relocate at any time. In marketing areas these women, for whom selling goods is not dishonorable, occasionally invest in petty commerce or in small livestock. (M'Bagne interview, July 1980)

The influx of cheaper Asian and European manufacturers has made the handiwork of the artisans less lucrative, although traditional artisanwork is still highly prized. As a consequence, artisanwork is no longer a full-time occupation, and for many women, has been almost altogether replaced by vending of alimentary products, cosmetics and increased agricultural and livestock activity. Further, some artisan caste occupations, such as tressing of hair, although they are still universally demanded, are no longer confined to artisans. Male artisans, such as the metalworkers, seem to have more easily adapted their skills to changing demand conditions; these men often repair radios, clocks, eyeglasses or gadgets.

A.1.c(4) Servile Occupations

Historically, the servile caste was composed of war captives or peoples unwilling to accept or defend Islam during the religious wars, and who, through respect to the conquering or returning warriors (nobles), consented to service the warriors' family needs. The matiubé, whether freed or unfreed, performed the range of menial housework and fieldwork activities for the noble family, and were provided in return with housing, food and clothing as well as a portion of the crop or herd.

Although most members of this caste have either bought or been awarded their freedom, and as such, have access to land, animals, and a salaried position, many continue to work for their previous masters under similar conditions. A khordo woman interviewed stated that she "bought" her independence with animals, jewelry and money. Her family had accumulated these belongings over the years as payment for services rendered, held in trust for them by the noble family. She continues to work for the torodo family as laundress, for a small salary and occasional gifts of food and clothing.[1] Her husband works independently of the family fabricating toothbrushes from wood collected in the bush, yet he too is entitled to financial support of the nobles. To this khordo

[1] 27 June 1980: "Des fois il arrive qu'un bon coeur lui remet un habit."

the fact that her children will be born in freedom and that she holds an honorable salaried job,[1] has fundamentally changed her social position.

Khordo children are often raised by their family and educated along with the noble children, although working simultaneously as household laborers. Once migrated from the village, they possess the skills and social anonymity to install themselves in a desired lifestyle. Several khordo women interviewed indicated that, once migrated from their region of origin, they had adopted the self-label of torodo as well as the mannerisms and consumption previously characteristic of, and limited to, the torodo caste, including rental of servants.[2]

This newly acquired social standing does not necessarily sever the bonds of duty and obligations between khordo and noble. Previously, servants and slaves had the right, under Islamic law, to gifts and clothing distributed to the noble family at religious, baptism and marriage ceremonies. A khordo woman interviewed in Nouakchott stated that, as a member of an association of khorbe without masters (having bought freedom generations ago), she is entitled to gifts from noblewomen of her ancestral village holding ceremonies, whereas she is not obliged to work at these ceremonies.[3] According to this woman, the binding obligation on the part of the khordo to perform certain services for the village torodo no longer exists, whereas the obligation of the torodo, as noble, to sustain the lower caste, persists. In the case of ceremonies, a lack of torodo generosity is dishonorable and portends bad will.

The woman interviewed considered this adaptive income-earning activity as supplementary to the selling of millet and wheat cakes on the market. However, the khordo woman emphasized that requesting gifts of torobe figures significantly in her personal budget, explaining that "the money she receives

---

[1]Nouakchott, 27 June 1980: "La femme est lingère dans une grande famille Pular qui était les maîtres de leur famille à elle au temps passé. La maman, pour empêcher que ses enfants naissent dans la captivité s'est rachetée y mettant toutes ses richesses. Ce qui leur permet d'avoir un salaire dans cette famille qui la considère comme simple travailleuse qui gagne honorablement sa vie dans la noblesse."

[2]Nouakchott, 24 & 27 June; Boghé, 27 July.

[3]Nouakchott, 27 June: "Ces femmes ne travaillent pas lors des cérémonies. Elles vont directement voir celle qui organise, font remarquer leur présence et attendent comfortablement que cette dernière leur donne de l'argent qu'elles vont se partager équitablement. Elles sont toutes de Niabina, département M'Bagne. Elles sont au nombre de sept femmes. Elles ne se déplacent que si celle qui organise est un torodo de M'Bagne."

at ceremonies is carefully saved in her room so that later she can purchase jewelry or buy a house." The income from her cake sales, on the other hand, "is always added to daily expenses." [1]

In contrast, another khordo interviewed, also member of a khorbe association, returns at the festival times to her village for housework and cooking. Each woman is paid 2000 UM for the work accomplished. This woman, as well, saves this portion of her general revenue in order to support her family in Senegal. (Dieo, 24 June) In short, while the self-perception of these khordo women has changed considerably over recent generations, the ancestral ties of duties and obligations between themselves and nobles remain intact because these relations are considered to be, at times, mutually beneficial.

A.2 Status Concept Deriving from Women's Role in Household Production

A.2.a Women's Complementary and Secondary Production

The enumeration of Toucouleur and Peulh women's contribution to household production reveals two broad categories of activities performed by the women of the river society: productive activities which are secondary to men's activities, such as women's melon and vegetable production, milk production, and gathering of wild plants and leaves; and productive activities which are complementary to those of men, such as planting, guarding, harvesting, and transformation of grains, or caring for weak animals.

An activity may be defined as secondary when, although it contributes marginally to household income, it is accomplished by women and provides them with an important personal source of income. A husband lends his wife a small plot for her own cultivation purposes, and although his is the right to reappropriate the land, he does not interfere with the management of the woman's production or the disposal of her revenues. Women generally sell their own vegetable, fruit and leaf produce if they are within walking distance from a market. Under this practice, the husband loses none of his responsibility for providing the staple food of the family, even though his wife's income may have increased. After the purchase of some food goods, the balance of her revenues remain hers. Here, her labor is remunerated directly.

---

[1] 27 June: "L'argent qu'elle reçoit lors des cérémonies est soigneusement gardé dans sa chambre. Elle pourra plus tard se procurer des parures ou acheter leur propre baraque. Le bénéfice sur les beignets est toujours rajouté sur la dépense journalière."

In contrast, the woman's labor on the household grain fields contributes to a production whose proceeds are managed by the household head. Grains are marketed in quantity by men, while they may be bartered by the moude, once transformed, by women. In theory, the household head is the supervisor of the granary, distributing daily grain supplies (Diop, p 22). A few women interviewed stated that they themselves fetched the daily quantity of grain from the family stores, and under certain circumstances that called the men elsewhere for periods of time, sold sacks to meet household needs. In several villages, women literally possessed the keys to the granary. The fundamental qualification on women's disposal of family grains is that the grains, as staples and a priority economic crop, must be either consumed or sold for household necessities. Women's secondary field production, on the other hand, may be sold to purchase women's personal needs, such as jewelry and clothes for savings and daughters' dowries.[1]

As the fields of the Toucouleur woman are owned by her husband, the livestock of the Peulh woman is owned by her husband, unless she has inherited them, in which case they are held in trust by her husband or her family. The milk from these herds is hers to sell, and is her principal source of revenue, with which she procures some grains, tea and sugar, and her own personal effects.[2]

The subalbe fishmongers do not themselves fish and nor are they, in principal, allocated portions of the catch. Instead, they market the catch, purchasing household necessities and returning the balance to the household head. However, the revenues from the dried fish that could not be sold fresh or from the falo vegetable plots, as deriving from women's work, belong exclusively to the women (Theynil, 25 July; Boghé market, 25 July).

The productive activities which most significantly influence a woman's status and sense of well-being are the secondary activities, which are her responsibility to manage and whose revenues, beyond the purchase of household necessities, allow her to accumulate a personal savings. Kathleen Staudt warns

---

[1]July interviews, River Region: In one village, women transplant and sack rice, also fetching the daily rice rations from the stores in one of the houses; in another, women have been lent their own rice fields and store the rice in a room which the head of the co-op monitors. A Boghé woman interviewed on 24 June in Nouakchott stated that: "Elle utilisait, pour sa famille, la récolte, pour la nourriture de l'année et la gardait dans une chambre qui n'a qu'un lit de côté et les sacs de l'autre. ...Elle vendait trois ou quatre sacs souvent pour les denrées alimentaires."

[2]Aleg origin Peulh; Danqueremou Peulhs, 22 August; Seyna Kouna Peulhs, 24 July; Grayzel, dissertation.

against misinterpretation of 'control over the proceeds of labor' on women's fields, contending that such control may be symbolic, for where women are responsible for feeding their families, women spend nearly all of their income on household expenditures, while men spend much less, leaving a sum for other investments.[1] In Mauritania, however, this assertion may belittle the woman's position in her household: in casual interviews, women emphasized that their vegetable fields allowed them, despite their husband's protests, to buy an animal or two and prepare their daughter's dowry (Theynil, M'Bagne). The extent of the cash earned through milk and vegetable sales may be minimal, yet the fact remains that these activities are the principal source of personal revenue, and in turn, status of women among women, inasmuch as this status is defined by the jewelry, clothes and possessions indicating wealth.

A.2.b Diversification of Risk and Women's Value Expressed as Labor Potential

The status of women in the community at large, on the other hand, is a function of the status of her husband who is the political representative of the household and the manager of the household production unit. The underlying characteristic of the river production system, given the low yield of agriculture and livestock and the relatively weighty percentage of consumer goods held by regional imports, is the necessity for diversification of production risk, as manifested by the multi-variate income-generating activities in which the river household engages, and especially as the occupational specialization of caste deteriorates.

In this non-specialized system, where the value of household labor is relatively high, and the importance of sustaining income-generating activities simultaneously is great, the value of women's household labor, in turn, is significant. Further, as more and more of family produce becomes exchangeable in the market place, so does the nominal monetary value of women's secondary production increase. In some cases, the percentage of household monetary revenues provided by women has increased. Generally, however, the cash-earning capacity of men, who are free to hold salaried jobs and migrate to urban areas where wage levels are higher, is astronomically higher than the revenue-earning capacity of women, who produce for a limited local market composed of consumers with little purchasing power. Therefore, while women sustaining the homestead may be assuming greater cash responsibilities, their husbands' monetary contribution has increased by a relatively greater proportion.

---

[1] "Tracing Sex Differentiation ..."

Nevertheless, the river woman's work, in a system where the family's production is diversified, is critical to the performance of varied tasks and the expansion of the household.[1] The labor of women allows for cultivation of several different types of soil and crops, the sale of primary and transformed agricultural and livestock products, and the efficient use of time and space, such as in the division of herds, or the maintenance of fields alongside herds.

Consequently, the Peulh/Toucouleur woman is an economic investment, or, a potential labor source and labor reproducer in a labor-intensive production unit. This value is reflected in the institution of the brideprice. The form of this payment - whether in kind or in money - varies among families and regions yet persists as a socio-economic tradition. Quite simply, the procurement of a wife has a measureable economic value deriving from her productive potential.

A.2.c Polygamy and Household Revenues

As a wife is the expression of labor potential, polygamy may be less a sign of a man's wealth[2] than it is an index of his labor force. To establish a definite correlation between household revenues and the number of wives is difficult given the fact that polygamy of more than two wives is rare today in Mauritania. Further, the relationship of polygamy to wealth is somewhat tautological; presumably, only a wealthy man can afford more than one wife while having more than one wife increases a man's opportunity to become wealthy.

The PUF study shows households with two wives claiming lesser revenues than those with one, while households with more than two wives manifest revenues clearly superior to those with one or two wives. This unclear relationship may be explained through the condition that a greater number of wives also generates a greater number of family members to be taken under charge, many of whom may be non-productive. (See Table 5, p 21)

---

[1] "La multiplicité des sources de revenues monétaires est remarquable. D'après le budget moyen, à aucun des dix postes de recette ne correspond plus de 20% de l'ensemble. ...Son économie semble curieusement équilibrée. ...à un très bas niveau, entre les divers secteurs d'activités. ...Si l'on ventile d'autre part les ménages d'après le nombre de sources de revenu dont chacun dispose, on s'aperçoit que la diversité des activités existant dans l'ensemble de la région se retrouve aussi au niveau du ménage. ...une population de gagne-petit ... toutes les ressources, toutes les activités sont mobilisées dans chaque ménage pour arriver à se procurer ce revenu monétaire." PUF, p 199; for figures, see PUF, p 202.

[2] PUF, p 267: "La fréquence de la polygamie n'apparaît pas liée à la catégorie socio-professionelle (caste)."

TABLE 5. Polygamy and Household Revenues

NUMBER OF WIVES	HOUSEHOLD REVENUE (CFA)	PERSONS/ HOUSEHOLD	REVENUE/ PERSON
0-1	22,000	5.2	4.25
2	31,000	8.3	3.75
3-4	81,000	9.5	8.50

SOURCE: PUF river valley census average.

In sum there appears to be some relationship, although no definitive correlation, between household revenues and number of wives. Overall, increasing the number of wives in a household creates not only a larger labor pool for the household but a larger labor force to sustain; or, polygamy effects both household revenue supply and household demand for reverues.

A.3 Effect of Production and Status Concept of Peulh/Toucouleur Women's Productive Potential

A.3.a Access to Field, Household and Market Place Worlds

The effect of a diversified household production and an incomplete sex division of labor within various household productive activities is that the river women possess both a wide range of skills and an acquaintance with field, river, livestock and marketing activities. Although certain activities are preferably accomplished by the men of the household, women are often physically present during men's activities and their workplaces common. Both men and women are aware of women's contribution to the household and each contributor is dependent on the other for one step of the production cycle. While men and women often choose to socialize separately, many tasks require their careful coordination. This was illustrated to us by the fact that both men and women interviewed described their spouses' occupations with ease, recognizing the labor required, the problems encountered and the importance of the other's contribution. Aside from expressing the condition of interdependence in men and women's work, this suggests, through the pride and concern revealed in discussing these activities, a strong emotional bond of mutual respect.

The significance of this simple observation lies in the assertion that this productive system permits the woman a mobility and a relatively great exposure to potential income-earning activities. In no way secluded, she is free to absorb and contemplate a broad range of alternatives. She has considerable access to information, not only from her own concession, but also from the market place itself.

Her principal problems, therefore, are not related to a social pressure to confine herself to a limited realm of activities, but are problems which are general to the region: low literacy, low productivity, sparse transport opportunities, limited effective demand for local products. Subsequently, in a region suffering from an overall lack of access to material inputs to production, climatic hardship, and limited physical infrastructure, her secondary activities are relegated to a disadvantageous position.

Since most households produce and transform their own basic foodstuffs internally, very little marketing of processed foodstuffs is observable along the river. Often cous-cous, whole or pounded, is lent between households to cover exceptional periods. Millet cakes are occasionally sold in the market, as the daily meal for vendors. Cakes, pounded millet, pounded leaves and spices are found in quantity on few markets. Value-added to agricultural produce, to what little extent it exists, appears to be largely non-monetarized.

A partial explanation for this phenomenon is the lack of incentives for producing home-processed foods for sale. The market for preserved fish and dried vegetables is a residual market to fresh produce. The paradoxical result of this consumer preference is that transformed produce, while embodying additional labor, and in the case of smoked fish, fuel costs, may command an equal or lesser price per unit on the market. Other than drying, pounding and some smoking in the case of fish and meat, there is very little home preservation and transformation for market sale.

A related problem is the distance to the market, so that labor-time expended is great compared to the possibility of selling on the limited market. Women may catch a ride with a vehicle into the market town, transporting only small quantities of produce. Often they entrust their goods to family friends or males of the family. Rarely can they pool enough resources to rent a vehicle - they simply have too little personal capital for such a risky venture. As a result, long-distance (beyond walking distance) commerce is confined to very few women.

A.3.b Access to Capital

The access of the Toucouleur or Peulh women to capital is minimal. Her source of capital through monetary exchange consists of any durable matter; women exchange clothes, utensils, food and jewelry, and all these goods are considered valuable for speculative purposes. The intensity with which they tend to circulate these goods can be explained in part by the fact that, traditionally, ownership of land, housing and animals is denied to them.

A.3.b(1) Land Tenure Difficulties

The existing land tenure system of the river region is notoriously confusing, yet, as a whole, extremely flexible from the standpoint of providing opportunities for land use or limited cultivation rights. Numerous types of rental and loan conditions are prevalent in the communities. At the same time, ultimate jurisdiction over a plot is most often a matter of heated village debate; conflicting colonial, pre-colonial, clearing and usufruit rights generate a situation of land insecurity. This insecurity, in turn, hinders agricultural investment.[1]

Even the literature on river property inheritance is often contradictory. Wane states that, traditionally, there are two categories of heritable property: 1) the collective (gallé) property which, as long as the gallé patriarch and foyré heads are in agreement, passes to the oldest son, brother, or cousin; and 2) the individual fields, allocated from the galle property to male household heads, which may be further distributed within the household. These plots and the buildings constructed upon them are the sole property of the dyom foyré and his sons. In either case, women and daughters are theoretically excluded from succession rights of land, housing and animals. The exceptions to the rule are: 1) a female being the only inheritor in line of succession; 2) inheritance from a deceased husband of a portion of his goods;[2] 3) a gift, often reappropriated after her death; and, 4) a purchase outside of the indivisible family lands, which she can cede to her children.

The fact that women are not included in succession rights may be explained through the rules of indivisibility of gallé lands. At marriage, a woman is transferred both physically and juridically to the gallé of her husband. Any goods belonging to her could in this way be alienated from her family. Intra-lineage marrieages are then sought in order to safeguard family possessions.

---

[1] PUF, p 111: "Etant donné la grande variété des modes de tenures et de leurs modalités d'application, on ne peut savoir à quelles proportions des terres cultivées s'applique chacun des ces types de tenures, et aujourd' hui, à l'heure où s'élaborent des projets d'aménagements de la Vallée on ne connaît pas véritablement sa struture agraire." ..PUF, p 123: "La fréquence de l'indivision et la quasi-impossibilité de vente des parcelles découragent toute tentative d'amélioration des terres."

[2] Wane states that where patriarchs possess individual fields these may be willed to men or women or sold. According to Wane, the Toucouleur widow has right to 1/8 of the goods left by her husband, this part doubling when the husband dies without primogenture.

Consequently, married women may prefer to leave their concession so that, if custom permits elsewhere, they may obtain personal endowment for their children.[1] Even use of gallé land is prohibited to women married outside of the lineage. 'Indivisibility' inhibits men from establishing themselves independently of the gallé patriarch, yet as co-owners of the gallé goods they have an irrevocable right to use of these goods. A woman is assured no such rights. Instead, she has rights to the fruits of her labor on fields lent by her husband, and in her absence, may still receive a portion of the harvest from her own gallé. (Nouakchott interviews, June-July 1980)

A.3.b(2) Transferable Capital, Gold and Livestock

The inevitable product of this closed system which functions against women's accumulation of capital and aggravates her financial insecurity is her search for other savings and investment in a transferable and exchangeable form. These are somewhat like savings bonds: they consist of small purchases of cloth, jewelry and animals which can be sold at a later date.[2]

The major sources of these goods are gifts from relatives, friends and husband. A meter of cloth, a bracelet or a trinket can be sold to buy either better goods or transformation supplies such as dyes, needles and thread.[3] Such activity is neither surprising nor is it due necessarily to the 'corruptive' influences of urbanization and monetarization. Wane writes that, since there was so little frequenting of the French school by Toucouleur girls, there seems to be no apparent relation between French schooling and this, according to Wane, 'emancipation:' "A cet égard, il n'y a pas eu, par exemple, de fréquentation féminine Toucouleur de l'école française, pour établir le moindre rapport entre cette fréquentation et l'émancipation(!) actuellement observable." (p 108) This phenomenon, inappropriately termed 'emancipation,' is more understandably caused by constraints on women's capital accumulation. As a result, river women tend to become accomplished speculators on their own commodities futures markets.

---

[1] PUF, p 122-123: "A celles qui sont mariées, comme cela est fréquent malgré le mariage préferentiel entre cousins, avec des hommes ne faisant pas partie de son groupe familial, des champs ne sont prêtés que très rarement dans la crainte qu'ils ne soient appropriés. ...Au contraire, la femme mariée ailleurs préfère, si la coûtume prévalente dans la région le lui permet sortir de l'indivision et obtenir sa part personnelle pour la remettre à ses propres enfants."

[2] 16 June, "Je vends tous: utensiles, pagnes, n'importe quoi ... tout est vendable."

[3] Wane, p 180: "Tendance à revendre pagnes pour s'établir comme teinturières..."

Grayzel, in describing Peulh women, remarked male consternation over their wealth in jewelry, which far surpassed their daily profits from small quantity milk sales. Aside from the animals held in trust for her by her family or husband (and not to be sold), the Peulh woman is endowed by her mother with gold jewelry. Older women's lobes are often empty of good rings - while young daughters' ears are laden. A woman of Theynil confirmed, with pride, that the sweat of her field labor (a field lent to her by her husband) hangs in gold from the ears of her sixteen year-old daughter, despite her husband's insults.

Another source of this jewelry is gifts, which are closely related to female charm and both marital and extramarital sexual favors. This custom is not unlike the Western custom of 'wining and dining.' Grayzel asserts that these exchanges, far from being dishonorable, are the expected norm of Peulh village existence, representing an adaptation to: 1) seasonal outmigration of men; 2) frailty of forced marriage; 3) appreciation of beauty and a life of leisure, which are scarce; 4) need of women for economic independence; and 5) need of women for transferable wealth. Suitors and male visitors are expected to provide tokens of esteem, and "through such casual and informal relations women acquire spending money, capital to buy sheep and goats, and jewelry, which serves not only as adornment, but more important, as savings and insurance against old age." (Grayzel, dissertation, p 89)

Without this means, recognized by both men and women, the marriage and support of children are jeopardized by divorce. With migration, men are absent for months to years, often leaving little alternative means of existence to their wives in the village.[1] In some cases women's gold can be utilized as collateral on loans drawn by husbands. The gold is not only a source of women's financial security but also a social security policy, and is useful for family investments. This source of income does not surface in discussions or in budget observations. While marginal to household revenue, it is crucial to the woman's well-being while married, with limited access to capital; upon divorce, with loss of all access to capital through her husband;[2] and in old age, with loss of physical attractiveness and strength for physical labor.

---

[1] Wane, p 181: "Celui-ci absent depuis plusiers mois n'ayant en outre laissé nul moyen de subsistence à celle-là."

[2] M'Bagne, 28 July: "Comment vit la femme divorcée et comment est-ce qu'elle est considérée au village?" ..."Elle peut voir les hommes et même les recevoir chez elle ... sans problème ... elle n'est plus fille ... elle connaît vie ..."

A.3.c Access to Village Mutual Support Associations

An alternative source of financial security for the traditional river woman is her fellow woman, who is both a moral and material support, and with whom she can share feelings and investment plans. The panoply of women's associations in this society exert pressure as well as provide a forum for the exchange of valuable information, and most significantly, a means through which savings may be multiplied.

The most universal association is the premarital age-set organization, responsible for the social blessing and material stocking of the young bride. Post-marriage, these associations may contribute for baptism ceremonies. Each member contributes goods or money which are carefully cataloged by the recipient. On the next ceremonial occasion she contributes an amount equivalent to that which was given to her. In principle, these exchanges are reciprocal obligations, tailored to the means of each giver.[1]

Diop (p 28) denies the utility of these traditional associations once the women are married, yet interviews reveal that these continue for different purposes, such as pilgrimage to Mecca or to the village of an esteemed marabout. One such organization, described by a woman in Nouakchott, numbers approximately fifty women. The women recite prayers, and adhere to a certain doctrine espoused by the marabout founder of their faith. The religious group serves a spiritual and also a social welfare function, where its members can be aided through the common fund in times of need, a husband's sickness, or loss of employment. Routine contributions include a 2000 UM membership fee, 100 UM monthly dues, 500 UM stipend for the visit of the marabout, and 300 UM tribute to the marabout on his departure. The women also rent cars with their fund in order to participate in religious festivals at the home village of their marabout (Dieo, 8 July).

Another type of traditional association is bound by caste ascription, and has as its purpose, saving money for social occasions. An association described by a Torodo woman is composed of fourteen torobe and one Khordo. The torobe pay a monthly dues of 200 UM, and at each family baptism or marriage, they pay the khordo 100 UM to recruit workers for the ceremony. Following the ceremony, the head of the club withdraws 1000 UM from the common fund and 40 UM for each torodo to pay the services of the khorbe (18 July).

---

[1] While some young women seemed ambivalent over the existence of this traditional institution in Boghé (Linda Spink), older women in a neighboring village stated that these groups were increasingly important, because "times are hard" (Theynil, 27 June).

Other associations are ostensibly tea-clubs or social gatherings which often traverse caste divisions (Review Session, 23 June). Even these gatherings are supported by weekly donations of 40-60 UM by each member toward the purchase of tea, sugar and snacks. These meetings, however casual, are a basis for group mobilization, and each is organized so as to supplement a woman's village status through allowing her to procure and circulate goods.

Respectable presentation of ceremonies and festivals and honoring of religious adherence are activities which are not necessarily supported by husbands. One woman informed us that the women of her community have a tontine of 1000 UM/month. At the end of the month they inscribe their names on a slip of paper and send for a child to pull one of the slips, and one of the women receives 5000 UM. The woman explained that the money she makes in the tontine is used for the purchase of clothes and gold, since her husband doesn't give her these, but "contents himself with the food supply ... the problem for men is to have boats and earn more money for God knows what."[1] Van Chi writes disparagingly of the conspicuous consumption required by the village status system, often entailing exorbitant expenditures conducted through usurious credit arrangements. She adds that public opinion generally blames women for the escalation of these expenditures, and relates these practices to the intense competition produced by polygamy.[2]

Whatever the social desirability of these status-related expenditures, they occupy an important position in the women's budget and one which is most often met by collective effort. There are four religious festivities a year, numerous marriages and baptisms, and a high value placed on everyday hospitality. Not only is the effort collective, but it is both caste-reinforcing, and on occasion, caste-neutralizing. Although the leader of the age-set is usually a torodo or fulbe (in this case, noble Peulh), there is no exclusion of castes. In other words, although both women are always conscious of the differences between khordo and torodo origins, the two women work and socialize together (Revision Session, 7 August). Finally, these traditional associations, varied and multi-purpose, furnish a basis for adaptation to a changing environment.

---

[1] Dieo, 3 July: "Le revenu de la femme interviewée est gardé pour de l'or ou des habits parce que, dit-elle, les hommes ne leur donnent pas de cadeaux... ils se contentent de donne pour la nourriture... le problème des hommes c'est d'avoir beaucoup de pirogues et de gagner beaucoup plus d'argent pour Dieu sait quoi."

[2] Van Chi, p 475: "Ce sont surtout les femmes, affirme l'opinion publique, qui puissent penser à des dépenses somptuaires - sous le prétexte du respect de la tradition, mais aussi parce que le régime de la polygamie incite les épouses d'un même homme à la pratique de la surenchère."

B. Elements of the Soninke and Wolof Production Systems

B.1 Soninke Division of Labor and Responsibilities

The dominant ethnic group in the Guidimakha region of Mauritania is the Soninke. Originating in what is now Mali, the Soninke later enslaved Malian Bambara who were their domestic and field laborers,[1] and today, along with the Haratin, constitute the principle source of salaried labor. The Bambara migrate seasonally and are paid with migrants remittances.

The Soninke preserve a historical image of rigid patriarchical social structures, institutionalized male migration, and, for women, comparative agricultural expertise. Indivisible fields are separated into collective fields (te-khore), men's fields (salumo) and women's fields (ya-kharinte). Work time is regulated closely between these fields; each morning, all family members work on the te-khore, each afternoon men collectively work the salumo by the order of genealogical seniority, and on Fridays, youngest men are free to work their own salumo.[2]

Harvest of te-khore fields is also indivisible; or, collective yield is guarded by the patriarch in a granary to which only he has the key. Selling this portion of the harvest is prohibited. Proceeds from the salumo and ya-kharinte, on the other hand, may be sold; while the patriarch has the right to request salumo/ya-kharinte yield in times of collective food scarcity. The result of this controlled system is that the Soninke, unlike other cultivators of Mauritania, continue to possess grain reserves. Typically, grains are not sold until a two or three year reserve has been stocked. The lag between harvest and sales time necessitates, in turn, attention to storage and drying techniques (Dembe Ba, tour, Summer 1979; Dieo, interview, 20 June 1980).[3]

---

[1] Dieo, Soninke slave caste woman, 20 June: "Son père était un captif (et la mère aussi). Avant la naissance de ses frères et elle, son père a donné tout le bétail qu'il possédait à ses maîtres. Depuis très longtemps, quand il y avait une bagarre, les gens se dispersaient et les plus forts capturainet les faibles et en faisaient des esclaves ou les revendaient. Ces captifs devaient travailler très dur pour se racheter leur liberté."

[2] War on Want, 1977, p 113: "However, we have found some families where only the women worked individual lots, the men working together on collective fields."

[3] Dieo, 20 June: "Après la récolte, le produit est gardé dans des greniers pour la nourriture de toute l'année et ils en gardent la semence pour l'année suivante... Chaque membre de la famille a le droit d'utiliser la récolte s'il avait semé auparavant, mais d'abord il faudrait voir le chef de famille pour qu'il donne l'autorisation."

The social hierarchy is reproduced, not only in rights to use of family labor and control over proceeds, but in the spatial distribution of land, or access to fields by soil-type. Walo, fondé and falo tenure is strictly regulated and dieri landholding arrangements appear more flexible (War on Want, Summer 1980). The dieri, however, is the most intensively cultivated area.

On the collective fields, women's labor contribution consists almost exclusively of planting and harvest activities. Occasionally, men may aid women with clearing and preparation of their fields, and in return, women may work temporarily on the salumo (Ba Khlidou, August 1980). Women are specialized in the production of peanuts and rice, cotton, indigo and gumbo. Their fields are primarily located in dieri depressions, as consistent with soil characteristices regarding their crops and with hierarchical access constraints. Women's fields were found to average only 2.6 square meters for peanuts and approximately 1 square meter for rice. The salumo fields, in contrast, averaged 34 hectare, and the collective fields, 2.8-3.2 hectare. (Extracts from War on Want, p 31-34). Men's fields represent less than ten percent of the average size of collective fields, and women's fields are insignificant in land area by comparison. However, both men and women may cultivate several of these plots, so that the total land area of the salumo and ya-kharinte fields may be considerably higher and represent a greater percentage of total family yield than is suggested by these figures.

Traditionally, these small women's plots furnish the sauces which the women are responsible to provide, the cash for the purchase of other household necessities, such as soap and cookware, and the cash for women's personal savings. In the past, women tended to sell rice, using groundnuts for sauce and soap-making, gumbo for sauce, and cotton/indigo for the weaving of cloth (interviews, Danquerémou, August).

Over time, the migration of men has diminished the size and productivity of men's and collective fields and the ability of men to provide staple grains through cultivation. The influx of imported soap and cloth, while relieving women of these activities, encourages their purchase of goods (in the case of cloth, weavers have lost their trade). Further, the drought has decreased groundnut relative to millet yield. These factors combine in a recent phenomenon: the cultivation of millet on the ya-kharinte. Both men and women have also increased their use of salaried or servile labor (War on Want, 1979;

interviews 1980). Employment of salaried labor, of course, is available to those with migrant revenues alone and varies considerably by locality and family (Fikry, p 48). Moreover, while women's labor on family and men's fields does not appear to have increased, women have begun to produce staple grains on their own fields. The War on Want (1977) also suggests that women have expanded their production into new lands, as consistent with the change in crop composition. The feeble size of the plots noted in the study, therefore, does not express the total land areas, or number of fields on which women may be producing.

Like Toucouleur women, Soninke women engage in various mutually supportive activities, defined closely by age-sets, which in village areas are categorized by three to four year intervals. One woman interviewed recounted that her age-set saved together in order to purchase agricultural tools and plows for a field they had succeeded in obtaining. The women married, and, obliged to follow their husbands who departed for the city, they abandoned their enterprise (Dieo, 20 June). While women tend to cultivate and dispose of their income individually, they are inclined to form work-groups and savings associations for agricultural investment. For the Soninke women, agriculture is a profession: "without her cultivation a Soninke woman is nothing ... agriculture is her 'métier' ..." (translation by Ba Khlidou, Danquerémou, August).

B.2 Comments Provided by Wolof Women Interviewed in Nouakchott

Although there is little documentation specific to the Wolof of southwestern Mauritania, the Wolof population as a whole is generously treated in Senegalese sociological research. According to some sociologists, controversy remains over the categorization of the Wolof as a distinct ethnic group. Through repeated migration and conquest by Peulh, Bidan and Fouta-Toro lineages, the customs of the Wolof, or "Walo-Walo," inhabiting the river region are in some ways indissociable from those of the Peulh/Toucouleur. The Wolof constitute, however, a separate linguistic entity.

As suggested by their local name, the Wolof of the river region cultivate the walo, or recession agricultural lands bordering the river. In contrast to the Pular and similarly to the Soninke, Wolof cultivation is crop-specific rather than task-specific; or, men cultivate millet and cowpeas, and women, some peanuts and rice. Fikry contends that both men and women are entitled to clearing and use rights, and that both patrilineal and matrilineal societies are found among the Wolof.

Social structure is categorized by occupational groups, as with the Toucouleur, and occupational groups are interrelated through mutual duties and obligations. A Wolof griote in Nouakchott explained that she "exploits her favorable social situation in order to improve her living conditions." She and her husband are well known among the guerrs (nobles) who often contract their services at ceremonies in Senegal. Specialized in the art of creating gaiety and ambiance, the griote also manages a small restaurant and a Koranic school in Nouakchott (Mariem Tall, July).

During the course of the interviews, researchers revealed their perception that Wolof women, because of polygamy pressures, are prone to excessive material expenditures (Review Section, 7 August). Interesting as an observation, this relative material wealth of some Wolof women may also be explained through the historic integration of the Rosso-St. Louis region with French colonial society and monetarized economy. The role of the Wolof as Senegalese-Mauritanian merchants, historically significant, is visible in Nouakchott. One Wolof merchant, inhabiting the low-rent fifth arrondissement, maintains a profitable Dakar-Nouakchott-Las Palmas-Morocco line of trade. Having purchased a gas stove and electric generator, she is now preparing to establish a taxi company (Dieo, 18 June).

Simultaneously, this woman transfers considerable monthly sums to her family in the river region. There seems to be, in this case, very little correlation between her apparent material propensities and any dissolution of extended family responsibilities. Other Wolof women interviewed described a range of activities they performed as young girls, and continue to perform as married women returning during vacations to their villages. A guerr woman currently living in Nouakchott often aids her mother in Rosso with cultivation and transformation of henna for sale in town. Her younger sisters watch over the household while her mother sells family garden vegetables at the market. Her mother also tends a few sheep, although the majority of the household herd was decimated in the early drought years. In order to cloth her young daughters, the mother occasionally sells the sheep previous to holidays, when prices are high. The woman, while in Nouakchott, sells millet and groundnut cakes before the schoolhouse. Another guerr woman of this region noted that, as a young girl and the oldest of her family, she was required to work the family fields along with her four brothers and two sisters. In general, Wolof women, like Soninke and Peulh/Toucouleur women, appear to possess a range of skills pertaining to cultivation and herding as well as product transformation and marketing.

C.1 The Productive Activities of Women within the Bidan Nomad and Semi-nomad Productive Systems

C.1.a The Activities of Noblewomen in the Zawaya Encampment

The spatial organization of tents in the nomad and semi-nomad camp reflects the hierarchy of status and occupation with the production unit. The tents of the oldest noble, his sons and brothers are clustered in the center, surrounded by those of servile groups charged with the domestic work, herding and guarding of household livestock and childcare. The lesser relatives of the patriarch inhabit tents distanced from the central tent in order of birth and the poorest relatives and non-relative dependents occupy the extremity. The distance between tents is determined by the need for caution against mixing herds allowing for an expeditious management of the herds by Zenaga/Haratin common herders (Dubié, p 135).

The Zawaya are charged with the preservation of history and Islam, or the intellectual and moral heritage of the society. While the men are Koranic educators, religious leaders and interpreters of Koran jurisprudence, women are often elementary and, or rare occasions, advanced Koranic educators.[1] The Zawaya, as a whole, are the privileged recipients of tribute in money and goods by all those who follow Islam. Consequently, they have heriditary right to certain annual and seasonal gifts from disciples (telmidi) and charges possessing animals. These rights include, for example, use of milk or meat animals, use of transport camels, and payment for marriage or other public occasions.

The Zawaya noble, in particular, has reciprocal obligations to maintain the timsafren (dependents) in his charge. For example, some animals may be stationed permanently at the noble tent as a milk source for the poorer relatives and dependents of the noble family. Dubié recounts an adage that "the grand tents are better to pilfer than inherit" (p 148). The wealth of the noble is systematically tempered by obligations, and the extent of these obligations is related to the noble's accumulation of wealth. The following nobleman's 1943 six-month budget shows, in fact, a semi-annual deficit (Table 6). The category of charge support is not included under expenses. If charge support were included in the expenses column, the budget would undoubtedly show a greater deficit. On the other hand, gifts and tribute furnish somewhat less than a third of tabulated receipts, indicating the importance of tribute in compensating the nobeman's losses.

---

[1] Historical cases: see Gerteiny.

TABLE 6. Six-Month Budget of Nobleman

Expenses (10 persons of which 5 are slaves)			Receipts		
Category	Value (Francs)	%	Category	Value (Francs)	%
Jewelry, Perfume, Hair	400	3	Sheep Sale	5,250	43
Services	250	2	Donkey Sale	1,300	11
Taxes	150	1	Transport, rent	600	5
Salaries, tent upkeep	200		Artisan Goods (for millet)	1,000	8
Clothes	5,600	43	Gifts, commerce, Servile Work	4,000	33
Millet (480 kg)	1,200	9			
Tea (8 kg)	2,800	23			
Sugar (80 kg)	2,000	17			
Totals	12,900	100	Totals	12,150	100

Source: Dubié, p 151, Trarza Camp, 1943

The noble Zawaya man conducts commerce and manages herders and livestock accounts. In families possessing cultivable land, he oversees cultivation and harvests. Consequently, he is often absent during the dry season in commerce and herding activities, returning at harvest points and for rainy season supervision of cultivation. The Zawaya woman is the mistress of the camp, especially during his absence, when she monitors the distribution of grain and milk and dried meat supplies to family and dependents, authorizes the fabrication of tent accoutrements and housework articles by the artisans, and oversees the household labor by the Abid and Haratin. Ideally, during the July date harvest she undergoes guetna (the date cure) in the oasis and until December and January, the milk cure (Dubié, p 149, and interviews, summer 1980). Lesser Zawaya women are specialized in the fabrication of butter and water and butter receptacles, and in weaving mats and rugs. In the region of Adrar, they conserve dried soured milk for dry season consumption.

All Zawaya women are purveyors of Islam, whether themselves educators or otherwise representative of religious women, which implies their respect for the position of women as decreed by the Koran. As a result, these women are generally literate in Arabic and versed in the Koran, yet comparatively secluded from close interaction with men. The few veiled women of Mauritania are still

found among the Zawaya (the souviyat), as well as the few Koranic educators (interviews Boumdeyt, Boutilimit, with Ahmed Salem).

C.1.b Hassani Noblewomen's Activities

Historically, the Hassani conquerors/protectors enjoy irrevocable and universal rights to water use, hospitality, and transport use, as well as political gifts from herders, the pacifistic Zawaya, see fishermen (Imraguen) and long-distance caravan merchants.[1] Dubié concludes that, for this reason, the warrior Hassani never developed a taste for material goods or attempted to constitute a capital in herds; the Hassani customs permitted them to subsist from tribute and pillage (p 172-73).

During the pacification, by necessity, many of these Hassani developed an interest in herding, agriculture and commerce, and settled semi-permanently. Like the Zawaya nobles, the Hassani employed specialized Zenaga/Haratin herders, artisans and griots for the retention of oral history, legends of the warrior heros and incitation to war. As with Zawaya nobles, Hassani were obliged to furnish gifts and material support to camp followers.

Dubié considers that the fundamental difference between the Hassani and Zawaya camps, in the 1950s, was that the Hassani possessed no alimentary stocks and appeared to live "from day to day" (p 180). He remarks that the Hassani power is based on the "the supremacy of one family over other castes." The chief is "a despot, but a feeble despot, at the mercy of his entourage," and moreover, "prisoner of his partisans and the dependents who live at his expense."[2] The basis of Hassani power, according to Dubié, lies neither in intellectual and religious adherence nor in productive wealth.

Hassani women, while they recount a similar set of activities related to tent supervision, also occasionally add livestock and agricultural activities including tending sick animals, supervising oasis grain crop harvests and

---

[1] see Panet

[2] p 181: "Leur pourvoir est fondé sur la suprématie d'une caste ou d'un clan sur des autres castes: l'Emir est peut-être un despot, mais un despot bien faible, à la merci de son entourage, plus ou moins prisonnier de ses partisans et de la tourbe de parasites vivant à ses dépenses : les uns et les autres ne le soutenant que dans la mesure où ils profitent de ses libéralités."

harvesting henna. Reputedly, Hassani women are free of speech and permitted more freedom in behavior, as a result of their less religiously defined lifestyle.[1]

C.1.c Zenaga Women's Occupations

Customarily, the Zenaga are the herders of both Zawaya and Hassani families, and are charged with the health, grouping and herding of the most valued livestock, the camels and sheep. They are repaid annually by herd with a young camel or sheep and clothing, and throughout their herding, the use of milk camels and sheep for subsistence or sale of products (Dubié, p 138). Rarely do they accumulate their own herds, since the animals that are given to them are usually sold for other subsistence pruchases (Ahmed Salem, September 1980). Zenaga are generally unaccompanied but visited by the owners of the herds. As guardians to the noble family's wealth, they are crucial to production yet, as tributaries, they are considered of relative low status in the society. In some cases, in fact, the Zenaga are considered inferior to the Haratin.

Zenaga women accompany the herds and young women may aid in the herding itself, following the weaker and tending the sick animals. Aside from setting tent and decamping, these women fabricate wool tents, leather utensils for the transport of water and the butter they prepare from sheep's milk. Butter is conserved in skins, often lined with dates which, well sealed, can last for a long period. Because the focus of the Zenaga woman is herding subsistence, she may possess a close knowledge of the care of animals and some expertise in use of livestock products (note: Bidan/Haratin women do not milk animals, and it is considered ignoble to sell milk and butter). The noble Zawaya women are entrusted to the Zenaga for milk cure and in preparation for their marriages.

---

[1] The continuity of this stereotype is revealed by several excerpts. One, transcribed from the journal of Panet in the 1850s, comments on the ease of divorce in the Adrar Emirat: "Je faisais ces reflexions un jour que je me promenais dans les champs, lorsqu'un Arabe arrive et demande à sa femme cueillant des dattes ce qu'étaient devenues deux planches de sel qui'il avait laissées dans sa case." "Je les ai empruntées," repondit celle-ci, "pour m'acheter du henné." "Peux-tu lex rendre maintenant." "Non," reprit la femme, "mais dans deux jours au plus tard." Puis un silence, et le mari, élevant la voix lui dit: "Aran h'lek." C'était fini, leur mariage venait d'être dissous. Cette femme quitta aussitôt les champs et alla pour ménager ses bagges (p 63). Panet also comments on the openness of some extramarital relations: "Quant aux femmes no mariées et aux jeune filles du peuple, elles reçoivent, avec ou san l'agrément de leur parents, les visites dex jeunes gens, jouent et folâtrent avec eux. Je l'ai pensé en voyant la familiarité grotesque qui existait entre les deux sexes; ensuite, par ce sans gêne avec lequel ellos m'arrêtaient souvent pour me demander si j'avais de l'argent." Another, recounted to us in the Dakar suburb of Pikine in 1980, described the facility with which Hassani women mingle with men. These excerpts may be more expressive of non-Bidan impressions of Hassani women than of Hassani women's actual behavior.

C.1.d Forgeronnes and Griote Occupations

The artisan and griote caste generally owns no animals or land, but lives in a symbiotic clientele relationship with the noble families. Dubié writes that these are the most demanding of the noble family's charge, retaining rights not only to grains and parts of all animals slaughtered, but also to any goods arriving in camp through commerce. The griots receive substantial gifts at receptions, voyages and holidays.

The forgeronne usually receives skins, tanned or untanned, and other raw materials from noble clients for the fabrication of decorative cushions, small leather articles and tea utensils, mats and water vessels. These women also string beads and work small jewelry for noblewomen. Although most noblewomen and servile caste women alike know mat, tent and vessel fabrication, the forgeronne's intricate work is more highly valued.

The griote is not only the entertainer of the tribe but traditionally possesses ability to influence the future, direct fortune, enhance love and ward off certain worldly evils. The Hassani griote sings epic histories and lauds the warrior family. The griots also practice a sort of 'inferior religion' through the inspiration of fear and admiration, which is believed to carry great significance in the lives of camp members.[1] The fear of slander by the griote is central to the griote's power over the noble family and the family coffers. Marabouts, however, are the principal guardians of literature, poetry, history and medical knowledge.

C.1.e Abid/Haratin Labor

In Dubié's study of the Trarza, Haratin men herded the beef and milk cattle[2] and some goats, cured sick animals, and butchered. They also sold milk, which is dishonorable for a noble Moor, and butter produced by Bidan and Haratin women. Women and men collected wood to produce charcoal and drew family water supplies, fabricating common water buckets and cord.

Most all of the manual labor of the camp, considered ignoble, is performed by the Haratin and Abid. The Haratin are, in turn, materially supported with use of milk cattle, portions of slaughtered animals, grain and clothes. The Abid are family slaves performing domestic labor, including food preparation,

[1] See Nelson, p 52: "As a sorceress a woman has more power over a man than as a saint because of her ability to divine the future, enhance love, warn of evil, and cure illnesses ... there is a superstitious fear of these women ... this 'inferior religion' is their domain."

[2] Cattle is least valued as a meat source.

childcare and wetnursing (Boutilimit, summer 1980), tending of goats, mint plots and in some recent cases, chickens. Inherited through families, some trace their descent to slaves accompanying the Hassani warriors in their earliest invasions. Like the freed slaves, these receive subsistence goods and gifts at marriages, baptisms and holidays, or, as stated in the Koran, on every occasion at which noble family members are distributed gifts.

The Haratin and Abid are also the cultivators of the noble families, and in the Chemamma (southwest), production is similar to that of the other riverine populations. In early summer, men and women sow dieri millet/cowpeas and women, melons. In August women primarily weed and guard crops. September is the month of women's butter preparation. Women harvest, dry and sack melon seeds in October/November, and the entire family harvests the dieri. In December, men prepare walo fields which men and women weed and guard. When gum production was still possible, men would depart for the gum trees and women harvested the walo, and threshed and sacked the sorghum. The harvest, aside from a minimal percentage, was ceded to the noble family who distributed any surplus to guests, relatives and dependents, retaining a quantity sufficient for the needs of the individual family (Dubié, p 140, 191-195, 201). Many Haratin are thus the sharecroppers of the Bidan.

In the northern or oases areas, the date palms are tended by the Haratin during May-June and harvested in July-August, while women plant melons. In areas where water can be trapped by dams, men construct the dams in September-October, women carrying water, provisions and tools. The area is then planted in millet/sorghum/cowpeas. In the oases, millet/cowpeas, wheat and peanuts, and today, vegetables and corn are planted by men and women. As in the riverine systems, women produce primarily the vegetable, melon and peanut crops, and the men, grain crops, although women aid in seeding, guarding, harvesting and threshing. The general rule, as described by most, is that the heavy work such as clearing, enclosing and breaking the soil is performed by men, and the hour-intensive tasks, such as guarding and watering, by women.

Since land is still largely owned by the Bidan, their involvement in this production continues to be supervisory and includes the disposal of a great percentage of the yield (Dubié, p 201; Assaba interviews). Declining yields, because of the sharecropping arrangement, affec- primarily the Haratin, who are still required to cede a percentage of their yield to Bidan landowners. The result is lack of incentive on the part of the Haratin cultivators to invest in their production. Curiously, the Abid often enjoy greater access than

the Haratin to Bidan land use. For example, the Bidan master may promise the Abd (singular form) the use of half of his domains if the Abd clears and cultivates all of his domains for a certain number of years. While the Abd is alive, these domains as well as the proceeds deriving from them are entirely for his use. On his death, the domains lent to him return to the Bidan master. In this case, the Abd has more incentive to work the land and enact technical improvements than has the Haratin. While the Abd is de facto owner of the land during his lifetime, the Haratin is a mere sharecropper, and is obliged annually to submit a great percentage of his crop to the Bidan (Grayzel).

C.2 Status Concept Deriving from Women's Role in Household Production

C.2.a Dependence on Servile Labor

The defining factor in the production system described is dependence on service Abid/Haratin labor, which, once eliminated, leaves land and herd in the owning caste but little force to produce. A second, and related characteristic, is the necessity for dispersed or extensive economic activities: commercial, herding, and cultivation activities are maintained simultaneously and in differing localities. Families divide the servile labor force among herds, date palms, and cultivation plots. Commercial enterprise during the dry season, for example, means that absentee landowners are able to continue production only through utilization of male and female servile labor. A diminished labor force allows lesser access to the various productive activities.

The noblewoman, like her husband, engages in supervisory and managerial activities. In the absence of her husband, these duties may increase in responsibility, but she herself does not necessarily assume direct herding or cultivation tasks (Billouwaire, August 1980). Although she may weave mats or perform refined household work, these are by preference produced by the artisans and servants. These servants, as well, provide the raw materials for her production:[1] bark, ash and water for tanning of skins, as well as tanned skins themselves. Of the Bidan, few have expertise in the working of livestock products.

C.2.b Separation of Bidan Men's and Women's Activities

Although, in Mauritania, the tent is open to both men and women of any caste, men are absent both during the day, in herding and cultivation supervision, and during seasonal periods, in commercial herding enterprise. Men and women share no common workplace: men supervise the herds and conduct

[1] Other plants include tare, eberar, chrout, eguenat, edbagh, salahaa, tejmkhi, tarya, henna, dubarq, mint; all are collected by Haratin (Kiffa, 16 August).

commerce while women supervise camp distribution of foodstuffs and household/ utensil maintenance. While men's and women's responsibilities are considered complementary, their work itself coincides only in the education of their children and administration of the camp at select points in time.[1]

Nelson writes that marital breakdown, or distance between husband and wife, is inherent to nomadic society: with the minimization of contact between spouses and "an accommodation based on lack of knowledge of the activities of spouses, distrust tends to widen the schism" (p 49). This assertion was confirmed in interviews with men and women who revealed no knowledge whatsoever of their spouse's productive activities. Most men stated vehemently that their wives did nothing, although when women began listing their daily activities, they acknowledged that women worked. Others, recognizing their spouse's activities, were simply unable to describe them. This element of ignorance, or attitude of deference, is crucial to understanding the persistence of work segregation even in conditions where absence of men and servile labor necessitate assuming formerly male tasks. Adaptation requires learning unfamiliar activities, just as adapting to loss of manual labor requires implementing techniques formerly only supervised.

C.2.c Value as Expressed in Leisure

The segregation of men's and women's activities and dependence on slave labor create in Bidan society an ideal woman who is both distanced from men and for whom labor is ignoble. The hardship of desert life expresses itself in a high premium placed on leisure - which is scarce. In a sense, the accumulation or consumption of leisure compensates for the inability, in a mobile system, to accumulate immobile consumption goods. At the same time, only the existence of a servile and tributary labor force allows for idleness. Accumulation of wealth is possible for few, and the degree to which women can be idle is reflective of the extent of this accumulated wealth. One determinant of social status, therefore, is wealth as manifested in a wife's leisure.

The central value of leisure is reinforced through nonformal education discouraging female activity and mobility. The three fundamental aspects of the traditional Zawaya girl's upbringing, for example, consist of force-feeding day

[1] For discussion of 'claustration' see Delarozière's writings. One woman, when asked what mutual responsibilities men and women shared, replied "the work of the night, and that's it." (Ntaka el Wasa)

and night, her elementary Koranic education, and her passive education as observer to her mother's household duties. The moral underpinning of this education is her spiritual inferiority. As a girl, she is considered more inclined to amoral behavior, and more susceptible to the 'evil eye,' the devil and other worldly evils. Consequently, she must be closely surveyed and retained in the tent, protected from the evils which may befall her, and which would, more importantly, degrade her family (September 1980).

As a result, the girl is perceived as a charge to the family who must feed her, pay for her education, and survey her movements at all times. If she slaps her brother, for example, she may be reproached with the following words: "That act is more lamentable than your birth (c'est plus grave que ta naissance)," indicating that her birth itself was a matter of unpleasantness. Likewise, and consistent with the enforced circumscription of her world, she is incapable of choosing a suitable marriage partner (although this changes in subsequent marriages). To remain unmarried and attached to her family's tent, is, on the other hand, detestable. Once married, she returns at the times of giving birth alone. (September 1980)

C.2.d Value in Bridewealth

Up until recently when the practice of force-feeding began to decline, 'gavage' further inhibited the women's mobility and level of activity. Health problems often ensued, and specifically, women experienced difficulties in childbirth. These difficulties, related to obesity, stamped the Bidan woman as physically inferior to men and less resistent than the Haratin. In the 1940s, Dubié writes disparagingly that noblemen often marry Haratin women because they are physically more resistant. Their "children tolerate the rigor of the climate more successfully than the children of the white women."[1] In fact, the force-fed Bidan woman was condemned to immobility, not only by the high value attached to her leisure, but also by the social requisite of her obesity. Although marriage was monogamous, it was socially acceptable for men to marry 'concubines' or servile women, for reproductive purposes. Today, the practice of gavage is waning, yet the ideal in terms of physical beauty continues.

---

[1] Dubié, p 25: "La fécondité des femmes est faible, leurs grossesses sont rarement normales, ... constatant qu'elles sont plus résistantes, les Maures épousent des concubines de race noire dont les enfants supportent les rigueurs du climat avec plus de succès que ceux des femmes de race blanche."

The Bidan woman, physically immobile, is nevertheless considered powerful within her household. Nelson relates the distribution and exercise of power among women in nomadic societies to the degree of Islamization: "in those nomadic societies in which there is a greater adherence to customary than to Sharia'a law, women enjoy a higher legal status and are in a better position to influence political decisions." Nelson continues that the nomad prototype defines the household, or tent, as the women's political area, and the camp as the men's political area, where community matters are deliberated (p 41). In Mauritania, this division seems in some ways synthetic, since women, as well as men, distribute camp foodgrains and administer certain categories of camp labor. On the other hand, men do not tend to assume household-related tasks. Further, women, if present in camp political meetings among men, are expected to hold their peace. A vociferous woman may be considered unrespectable (September 1980).

Nelson also suggests that women play an instrumental part in the accumulation of wealth in livestock. She adds that "although there is often argument about amount of bridewealth to be paid, debate is not between two families." Instead, "the men of both families agree and unite to beat down the price the bride's mother, backed by the women of the family, is demanding" (p 48). The final word on the brideprice is left to the bride's mother. In Mauritania, as well, the status of a herd-owner is related to his capacity to confer livestock to his bride and to endow his daughter with suitable dowry. In this sense, the 'power' of women is rather a misnomer for, more than anything else, it represents the struggle of men for social acceptance among men. The Bidan woman signifies, as expressed in the degree of immobility and idleness, and in the extent of her bridewealth, the accumulation of her husband and family.

C.3 Effects of Productive Role and Status Concept on Women's Productive Potential

C.3.a Relative Isolation and Confinement to Tent

Relative to men of the prototypical society, Bidan women are geographically isolated, in that their worldview is bordered by the camp and their primary realm of activity limited to the tent. Until independence, commerce and political missions were almost exclusively the responsibility of men of the camp. Women were aware of these activities, but rarely participated in them.

C.3.b Access to Capital, Political Institutions and Skills

Through inheritance, gifts and brideprice, some Bidan women possess nevertheless a personal capital in animals and, occasionally, in land, and their rights to this capital on divorce or widowhood are protected, after a fashion, through the intricacies of Islamic law.[1] Post-independence, these women found themselves enjoying both the financial capability, and through the efforts of the national political party's Mouvement National des Femmes (MNF),[2] the community political mechanism, with which to support their activities. During this period, Bidan women utilized their familiarity with commerce and closer knowledge of camp management to embark on various commercial and business enterprises. On a national level, rug, mat and sewing centers were opened by the MNF in several locations. Zawaya women, especially, pressured for national educational involvement of women.

Following the change in government, many of these national efforts collapsed through lack of political and financial support.[3] The organized women's movement was also identified with the French wife of Ould Daddah, and although the President of the Conseil Supérieur des Femmes was a Mauritanian and a Toucouleur, the movement was acknowledged as having been formed and headed by an occidental woman, which undermined its acceptability. Individually, some Bidan women continue to pursue commercial and intellectual activities, although few possess the means or family support to do so. The vast majority of Bidan women possess few skills other than tent management. Some, formerly dependent on servants for food preparation and even childcare, are desperately ignorant of sound household techniques. Once separated from the tent, livestock and servants, these women are not only deprived of raw materials, labor force and techniques for production, but they are also alienated from the world with which they are familiar. The psychological shock of this change inhibits their desire to adapt to new environmental conditions.

---

[1] While Dubié writes, in 1943, that tribal land is distributed only through consent of the chief for the purposes of maintaining indivisibility (p 185), PUF contends that cultivating rights appear tantamount to ownership in the French legal sense, and remarks considerable sales of land between Moors in the Chemamma, indicating alienability. According to Islamic law, women may inherit half a male share of any legacy, but since they are legal minors, their property should be managed by male kinsmen, or when they marry, by their husbands.

[2] See early political statements, CSF/MNF and "Le Dossier de la Mauritanie," Ch. XVI.

[3] The attempts at employing women also coincided with national industrialization policies, which collapsed after the change in regime.

The Haratin women, by contrast, carry with them skills in field, livestock product transformation and domestic activities, however rudimentary. They are neither constrained by social stigmas on work nor by physical difficulties: they are inhibited, instead, by their position of social inferiority, and often by self-effacing attitudes stemming from their history as servile laborers. The forgeronnes and griotes also possess marketable skills in refined leatherwork and entertainment. The Zenaga, on the other hand, are the most socially isolated through their occupation, are largely uneducated, and are viewed as marginal to the society.

SECTION II. EVOLVING PARADIGMS: PRESSURES AFFECTING MAURITANIA PRODUCTIVE SYSTEMS

A. Pre-drought Pressures

A.1 Relocation of Trade Loci

The drought of the 1970s differs significantly from the previous droughts of the twentieth century in that: 1) earlier droughts were localized; 2) the ratio of population and animals to land was lower in earlier droughts; and, 3) the 1970s drought coincides with other fundamental socio-economic changes. These changes preceed the drought of the 1970s, being the product of two secular pressures: the French pacification campaign and the attraction of commerce away from the Trans-Saharan and Saharan routes toward the Senegalese river nexus and the south.

The defining characteristic of the pastoral community is strict cohesion and occupational hierarchy in the face of minimal resources and climatic hardship; or, the balance of man and nature. The encampment lifestype is frugal and the accumulation of wealth is represented in the herd. Accumulation of immobile or material goods inhibits the functioning of the camp economy, which requires adaptive seasonal movement. The French pacification campaign eliminated the power base of the warrior Hassani tribes, whose means of subsistence was centered on war, tribute and pillage. The French administrative structure, although it used the political power of the intellectual Zawaya tribes, revered Western diplomas over Koranic education. The major alternative which the French occupation offered was protection in new commercial endeavors. Hence, commerce became the choice occupation of increasing numbers of Bidan, with two critical results: the Bidan enriched himself materially, and long-distance caravan commerce was transplanted by the market commerce of monetarized Western imports.

The last twenty years mark a considerable growth in the consumption of imported goods such as rice, Chinese tea, sugar, damask (bazin), plastic sandals, matches and tobacco. Regionally produced luxury items procured through caravan trade have for some time occupied a significant place in tent budgets,[1] yet following the pacification, extra-regional imports procured through the market at the riverports and in Senegal absorbed a larger percentage of daily consumption goods. The radio, meantime, shortened the distance

[1] for products other than tea, see Dubié.

from the European world, and thwarted the protective isolation of the nomadic community relative to the sedentarized. A generalized market center regulated by monetary exchange and reflective of world prices gradually replaced the regional long-distance commerce monopolized by the nomad caravan.[1]

A.2 Deteriorating Terms of Trade for Agricultural and Livestock Products

With the exception of the date trade, which is primarily localized, the gum trade of the Trarza and the salt trade of Tichit, the only nomadic product that could be sold for cash in large volume was livestock. In the valley, no particular commercial cash crop was developed to finance imports. Bonte contends that millet was, until the late 1950s, produced as a regional export crop in the river area. The settlement in the region of vast numbers of Haratin originally furnished labor for millet production. This migration later contributed to the parcelling and to the concentration of river lands. By the late 1950s, millet was no longer produced in sufficient quantity to export, and millet production ceased to finance regional imports.[2]

The terms of trade for the livestock of the inland herder are extremely disadvantageous. The animal is typically bought at a low price in the interior by an intermediary and transported on the hoof over great distances, while the imported consumer good is sold by the local merchant at a high price reflecting distance and difficult transport conditions.[3]

---

[1] Bonte, P 14: "De nouveaux reseaux commerciaux se mettent aussi en place au Sud en particulier avec les traitants de Saint-Louis remplacés par les maisons de commerce coloniales au début du 20 ème siècle ... Cependent là encore les maures ont plus une fonction de transporteur que de commerçant." The position of the Bidan merchant during the early colonial period is unclear, yet Bonte implies that colonial commercial houses employed the Bidan as transporters and intermediaries.

[2] Bonte, p 10: "Dans les régions d'agriculture pluviale extensive on retrouve cette tendance aux migrations agricoles et a la densification des terroirs. La conjonction des ces migrations agricoles et de l'implantation croissante au Sud des agro-pasteurs haratins va assez rapidement déboucher sur une situation de relative saturation compte tenu de la nature des techniques de production. Cependent en une première étape, ces migrations agricoles favorisent en certain développement de la production céréalière de la vallée qui, jusqu'au années quarante reste exportatrice de céréales." (Etudes du Changement Social: Mouvements de Population et Migrations en Mauritanie, unofficial document)

[3] For actual price indices of terms of trade, see Toupet.

In order to regulate import prices, the Mauritanian government created the SONIMEX (1966), which has a monopoly of wholesale import goods. Much commercial exchange actually occurs outside this institution whose coverage of consumer demand is limited. Under the establishment of this imperfect price-regulating mechanism, the herder of the interior exchanges a primary product whose value fluctuates considerably, due to seasonal conditions, for a final product whose floor price is fixed. Both in his sale to the livestock trader and in his purchase of consumer goods from the merchant, the producer is a price-taker. The cultivator, likewise, is confronted with tremendous yield fluctuations against a steadily rising import price (Van Chi, p 458-459).

A.3 Consequent Importance of Merchant and Migrant Activities

A.3.a Credit Relationships

The opportunities for accumulation of wealth through monetarized commerce over this period were substantial. Because of seasonal price fluctuations, relatively high import price levels, difficulty of transport and trade licensing, the consumer of the interior's major means of purchase from merchants was and still is credit.[1]

Islam condemns usury but defines poorly the difference between a gift and a loan on interest.[2] The means of transforming simple exchange to credit with interest rates are manifold. One practice cited by Toupet, is the moudaf, which permits the reimbursement of credit-in-kind with a second or third good: "X gives Y a quantity of rice, tea, or cloth and reclaims the next month a lot of animals of which the value is much higher."[3] While merchants in Boghé and Kiffa (June/July 1980) denied the use of interest rates, they described lending in kind in one season, and recuperating the loan in cash or kind during a season of inflated prices. This sort of exchange is confined to those merchants owning wholesale licenses and therefore capable of stocking goods through seasonal price fluctuations. Consequently, the merchant benefits from two effects:

---

[1] Van Chi, p 469: "villes ou campages, l'endettement est lie ainsi pour une part déterminante a la faiblesse des revenus et du pourvoir d'achat de es revenus: le credit devient partout indispensable pour simplement survivre."

[2] Allah a déclaré hâte le troc et déclaré illicit l'usure ...Allah annulera les profits de l'usure alors qu'il fructifiera des aumônes.

[3] Toupet, p 333: "X donne a Y une quantité de riz ou do thé ou de tissus et lui réclame le mois suivant un lot d'animaux dont la valeur est beaucoup plus élevée." See also Dubié, p 218-219.

the interest rate embodied in the repayment of the good in kind, and the effect of the seasonal inflation of the value of the good.[1]

Other practices found in rural areas involve more than one good. For example, the family of a cultivator may incur dry season credits from one merchant for the consumption of grains, tea and sugar. The previous harvest has been insufficient for the stocking of over a two or three month grains supply. During the dry season, when the husband migrates in search of wage-earnings, the family, non-productive, purchases goods on credit from the village licensed merchant. At the close of the dry season, the husband returns to repay debts and commence field preparation. At this point, having earned a wage insufficient to cover his debts, he cedes an animal to the merchant as repayment. The price of grains in terms of meat has increased since the time of the grains loan extension, and the merchant benefits from an effective interest rate through the repayment of the grains loan in meat. The merchant then holds the animal until the price of animals rises, such as before the Tabaski holiday, when purchase of animals is a social obligation. He benefits from an interest rate on his original loan, as well as seasonal fluctuations in the value of animals.[2]

The significance of this credit system relates to the assertion that the combination of deteriorating terms of trade in livestock and grains for the consumer goods regional imports caused the locus of economic activity to gravitate toward Senegal. Livestock was traded in the South, and labor migrated toward the South in order to earn cash. Both the value of butchered meat and the value of labor were retained outside of Mauritania. In Mauritania, exorbitant interest rates only increased the need for cash, while under declining local production, credit became more and more necessary for local

---

[1] In the following example, the recuperation of the loan is over 100 percent of the value of the loaned good. (Actual Conditions, Kiffa, 17 August 1980)

	Loan Conditions t (February)	Repayment Conditions t (August)
	0	1
Millet		
Market P (Kiffa)	60 UM/unit	100 UM/unit
Loan P (interior)	65 UM/unit	105 UM/unit

[2] In February, the consumer purchases 10 moudes of millet on credit. The price of millet in terms of meat is 1:7. The consumer repays the merchant with an animal in June, when the price of millet in terms of meat is 1:10. In October, the merchant sells the animal, after the grains harvest and when the demand for Tabaski animals is high, or the price of meat in terms of millet is 10:2. In the first transaction the merchant earns 3 units of meat at an effective interest rate of over 40 percent, and in the second, the value of the meat appreciates by 100 percent.

procurement of goods.[1] Relatively low values for local livestock exports and local labor, and high values for imports were reinforced through the credit system.

A.3.b Seasonal Migrations

A.3.b(1) Bidan/Haratin Migration

The importance of various commercial activities and Senegal migration to the Bidan/Haratin economy is illustrated by the fact that in 1970, before the worst years of the drought, the Mauritanian embassy counted one-quarter of a million Bidan and Haratin in Senegal, perhaps nearly one-quarter of the official population of Mauritania at that time. The census is undoubtedly understated, since it misses short-term displacements and a number of Haratin who have adopted Senegalese names, language and lifestyle. (Dubié notes this same phenomenon early in the 1950s.)

The outstanding majority of these Bidan are engaged in retail commerce, a domain in which they are particularly successful. Again Van Chi attributes their favorable position to the credit flexibility of the Bidan retailer, who is "at once flexible with the extension of credit to Senegalese clientele and intractable in demanding what falls due." The Bidan merchant is "infinitely closer to the African client than is the Lebanese," and his strength is "his silence and discretion." Further, the Senegalese client prefers to accumulate debts with the Bidan over with the Senegalese, because while the Bidan guards his secret, the fellow Senegalese is judgmental. Consequently, the Bidan retailers have nearly monopolized the distribution of daily food stuffs, and are also some of the more prosperous of Dakar and village retailers.[2]

---

[1] Bonte, p 15: "Cela corresponde au développement des poles économiques hors de la Mauritanie qui constituera pour l'essential, aux yeux du colonisateur, une reserve de produits de consommation, le bétail, dans une bien moindre mésure de force de travail humaine, les deux a bon marché, qui rendront plus rentable l'exploitation de la zone arachidière sénégalais."

[2] Van Chi, p 812: "Il est à la fois souple pour accorder le crédit dont ne peut se passer la clientele sénégalaise, mais intractable dans l'exigence ce qui lui est due. Il est infiniment plus proche au client africain que ne peut l'etre le Libanais ... La force du Maure, c'est son silence et sa discretion. Le client sénégalais préfère avoir des dettes chez le Maure plutôt que chez un congenère, car le Maure se tait tandis que le boutiquier sénégalais parle et juge. C'est pourquoi les épiciers Maures ont pratiquement monopolisé la distribution aux sénégalais des denrées composant la 'ration' et, grâce a cela, sont les détaillants les plus prospères des quartiers populaires de Dakar et les villes de l'intérieur." See also Dubié, p 239.

For the Bidan, the French occupation of Senegal also offered livestock commercial opportunities. According to Van Chi, butchering and sale of meat has been a specialty and quasi-monopoly of migrant Bidan for over twenty years in most villages of northern Senegal, and since 1960, in Dakar.[1] The livestock market, in 1980, is a vertically integrated market still largely controlled by the migrant and expatriate Bidan population (Grayzel and Ahmed Salem, July 1980).

During the colonial period, French butchers dominated the meat market in Dakar, financing Bidan for the purchase of animals in livestock herding regions. Following the departure of the European butchers, slaughtering and butchering were "Africanized," or rather, assumed by the Bidan and Haratin population. The Bidan still delegate members of their family, Peulh shepherds, servile Soninke or Haratin to search out and lead in herds. Van Chi explains the persistence of this monopoly through the convenient credit system utilized with herders. Animals bought on the hoof are not paid for until several months following purchase. This advance from herders to butchers permits the latter to negotiate purchases with little capital outlay.

The suppliers of the Dakar market are travelling merchants and intermediaries who buy from herders outside of Dakar and resell to the Dakar market. Those are primarily Bidan and Haratin, although the group includes Malians, Senegalese and Ivoiriens. The next tier of merchants purchases the livestock on the hoof and sells to the slaughterhouses. The large animals are bought by Bidan; the small, by Haratin (Ahmed Salem, July 1980). The slaughterhouse workers are generally Haratin,[2] who are also butchers and vendors of grilled meat in the city market and street stalls of Dakar.

Butchering is generally considered non-Moslem; or, the butcher cannot ascend to paradise. This belief has allowed for the perpetuation of Haratin, or lower class workers, as butchers and meat-vendors. Currently, economic conditions are such that the vending of grilled meat is attractive to Senegalese.

---

[1] Van Chi, p 809: "L'abattage au bétail et la vente de viande sont une specialité voire un monopôle des Maures, depuis longtemps dans toutes les villes de l'intérieur du Senegal, et depuis 1960, a Dakar." See also Dubié, p 239, and Bonte, p 16: "en 1904 le marché de bétail est installé à Louga centralisant les arrivages de bétail de Mauritanie pour les distribuer sur Dakar et jusqu'en Gambie."

[2] Pikine neighborhood was established for slaughterhouse workers.

These, unlike Haratin, have the financial means and experience required to dress a shop and advertise (Grayzel, Dakar, July 1980). Van Chi claims that even the Senegalese meat vendors, some of whom are lower class Wolofs, are employees of Bidan (p 810-811).

The consequent prosperity of Bidan is easily observable in Pikine, a neighborhood almost entirely populated by Bidan and Haratin. As a migrant and immigrant quarter, Pikine is unprotected from the banditry and homicide incidents that now beset it (Interviews, July 1980). While expertise in lending may have facilitated Senegalese-Bidan relations, indebtedness, credit dependence and the relative prosperity of some Bidan has led to considerable tension.

Van Chi also writes of the 'solidarity' of the migrant community in Dakar, which is structured in family groups, managed by Bidan, and served as in Mauritania by the Haratin. The Bidan/Haratin division of labor is largely reproduced in the new city, where Haratin work as charcoal and water carriers, cous-cous pounders, vendors and butchers. In the meantime, persistent use of slave and servile labor in the oasis production of Mauritania has allowed for this seasonal migration of the Bidan to Dakar as absentee landlords. Subsequently, Senegal has also become a refuge for departing slaves and servants, who in Senegal, can discard their casted identity more easily than in Mauritania. Thus, while slave labor production, both on the oasis and in the new city, permits the growth of seasonal migration for the Bidan, Bidan absenteeism in turn gradually erodes the effective Haratin labor force.

A.3.b(2) Toucouleur/Peulh Migration

For the purchase of sugar, tea, tobacco and imported cloth, and the accumulation of money to pay the brideprice, wage-earning became a necessity in the predominantly barter and subsistence economy of the river region 20 years before the drought. Opportunities for wage-labor were found in Dakar and in the peanut-producting regions of Senegal. Peulh have long been typified as migrant agricultural workers, and Toucouleur as porters, barmen and waiters in Dakar.[1]

During the 1960s, most migration was male and seasonal, including members of all castes but very few women or wives. While the PUF study found that two-thirds of the men interviewed had left the valley at least once in search of wage-earning activities, only one-third of the absences were greater

[1] PUF, p 240 (1950s): "C'est d'ailleurs la constation que chacun peut faire à Dakar ou dans les autres centres urbains au Senegal, en interrogeant sur les origines. Les garçons de restaurant, les vendeurs de journaux ou des cigarettes ... la plûpart sont Toucouleur."

than one year in duration. The mean period of absence was ten months, and the period of village presence, one or two harvests.[1] In other words, the rhythm of the migrant's departure and return did not conform to a distinct seasonal pattern, implying that his migration was for the specific purpose of supplementing family income on an irregular basis and also that his work prospects in town were far from steady.[2] The migrant of the 1960s was not a "professional" migrant.

While the male household head, or dyom gallé/foyré, is absent, fields are cultivated by family members, tenants, matiube or hired Haratin. The PUF study revealed that, by the 1960s, over 75 percent of those men who migrated had their walo fields cultivated in their absence.[3] Nowhere in this study are women as field workers or managers mentioned. Either female labor was considered accessory rather than primary to household production, or this "oversight" reflects real control over the proceeds from field labor, distributed and sold by concession males.

The PUF study also evidences the critical importance of migrant remittances in family budgets during the 1960s, or before the latest drought. When the cash-earning potential of rural activities is compared to actual urban wage-earning, the importance of these remittances is further emphasized. In the study, rural production is valued through applying local hypothetical market costs of goods. In Table 7, wages earned in the urban economy provided 28 percent of total family monetary revenues including hypothetical value of rural production.[4] Over 50 percent of expenditures, however, consist of urban economy goods which are scarce to the local river economy, and whose value in terms of locally produced goods is high. The value of rural goods, at the same time, is destined to provide 22 percent of urban economy purchases, or the difference

---

[1] PUF, p 243: Out of 300 interviews, "plus de la moitié (54%) des absences son supérieures a la durée d'une campagne agricole, mais seulement un tiers environ (36%) sont supérieure a une année. En moyenne, un migrant reste absent dix mois. Il reste pour au moins un ou deux campagnes agricoles au village."

[2] For elaboration, see PUF, p 250.

[3] See PUF, p 247.

[4] The PUF study claims "près de 40% du revenu monetaire de la vallée et donc plus de 20% du revenu global compte tenu de l'autoconsommation et du troc, résulte de transfers de revenu acquis en dehors de la vallée par ses habitants lors de leur migration," taking into account the fact that a certain percentage of sales revenue in the villages derives from goods bought in the city and resold in the village, as well as remittances, pensions and commerce.

between total regional imports (50 percent) and cash provided through urban economy remittances (28 percent). Therefore, the value of local goods may be overstated since a considerable portion of this value is used for the purchase of imports.[1] The value of these goods, if determined on the basis of actual exchange value (or, on the basis of urban wage and price structures) would be less.

TABLE 7. Migration Revenues as Percentage of Revenue (1), Average Fouta Household, 1957-58, per Person/Year

Category of Earnings	CFA/Person/Year
Monetary Revenue	4,395
Exchange Value (2)	735
Home Consumption Value (2)	5,060
Total Revenue	10,190
Migration Revenue	1,210
Migration as a Percentage of Monetary Revenue	28%
Migration as a Percentage of Total Revenue	11%
(1) Migration revenue is provided by men; exchange, home consumption value and other monetary revenues are provided by men and women.	
(2) Value of exchange and home consumed goods is imputed from local market prices. This method overstates effective local demand, and hence, price attainable at the local market; further, it distorts the real value in that it ignores rural/urban wage and price disparities.	
Distribution of Monetary Expenditures	
Local Food Goods	23.5%
Imported Food Goods	22.0%
Other Categories of Imports:	
Clothes	28.5%
Consumer Goods (Thread, Soap, Kerosene)	1.0%
Heavy Goods	4.5%
Construction	3.0%
Ceremonies, Gifts	2.5%
Taxes	6.5%
Transport	3.0%
Cultivation (Rental, Labor, Tools)	5.5%

Source: Extracted from PUF, p 196.

[1] These goods include women's labor.

Finally, it should be noted that monetary migration revenues figure less significantly in the Peulh than in the Toucouleur budget sample. Also, consumer goods other than food occupy a lesser position in the Peulh import budget. The seasonal migration of the Peulh, at that point in time, may have been largely focused on non-monetarized livestock herding rather than movement for livestock sale and wage labor.

A.3.b(3) Soninke Migration

The Soninke are the thoroughbreds of the river migrants, recruited by maritime enterprises and later as manual laborers, and holding, in fact, the largest ethnic representation among black African migrant workers in France. Both their migrant social structure in the foyers of Paris and their village social structure are adapted to streamlined economizing and substantial village transfers of wealth. The system is reinforced by social institutions related to emigration. These include patriarchal management of the compound, and social pressures emanating from the strident competition among male migrants.

Despite the adaptability of Soninke society, the rigid adherence to these social institutions has contributed to a steady deterioration of the Guidimakha's agricultural production. In this region, more so than in the western riger region, agricultural production is sustained by women and servile producers of grains, peanuts and some vegetables. There are striking contradictions in enforcing property indivisibility over migrants' individual enrichment, and in retaining a patriarchal decision-making system over a heavily female and servile agricultural force.

Although women theoretically retain the product of their labor on their own fields, more and more of their individual production is destined for family use because of the low production of family fields and the rising cost of living.[1] While the overwhelming portion of the family monetary revenues is provided by the migrant males, their lack of specialization and low wage on the European scale cannot keep pace with the rising costs of maintaining the consumption patterns they bring home.

The War on Want concludes that although large monetary flows exist within the rural community, these follow well-defined circuits. In the village interviews, some women still produce indigo-tinted cotton pagnes and home made soap, consume little tea, and barter their goods. European wages often return to the European economy in consumer purchases, rather than to investment in

[1] Interviews in Selibaby, Danquéremou, Gouraye, August 1980.

agricultural technology. Jewelry and radios are purchased, but rarely agricultural tools, pumps or wells. In some cases, remittances are used to hire labor (see War on Want documents).

B. Drought Pressures

The impact of the last ten years' drought is not easily dissociated from those influences already straining Mauritania society previous to this period. Several factors have permanently altered the transhumant and especially the nomad society. These are dispossession, accelerated migration, sedentarization and food aid dependence.

B.1 Nomad Dispossession and Loss of Productive Force

Toupet states that the 1970s drought signals the 'crisis' of the nomad society. Oriented toward the material wealth and commercial economy of the south, many Bidan were dispossessed in the 1970s through the loss of their herds, and forced to settle definitively the southern agricultural zone and the administrative-commercial capital of Nouakchott.

During this period, the government also exerted political pressure to liberate slave and servile labor. While many geographically isolated or occupationally dependent Haratin and Abid remain as tenants, servile workers or slaves for their masters, most of them are theoretically capable of deserting in search of employment. Most assume menial or petty commerce positions because of their low social status and an overall lack of modern sector employment opportunities. Itinerant laborers, Haratin interviewed confirmed that their current financial status is scarcely preferable to that of their previous position, yet because they are willing to perform any task, no matter how demeaning, they are "underemployed" rather than "unemployed" (Interviews, Kiffa).

On the other hand, the Bidan have lost both capital in livestock and Haratin labor force. The Haratin often become a financial burden on the Bidan household, and those who maintain their Haratin are less able to support them. Some Bidan are unused to and unknowledgeable about aspects of oasis and recession agricultural production. Other Bidan, with longer-standing agricultural involvement, are faced with declining land yields and Haratin labor exodus. In general, these production systems have been emptied of much livestock and land capital and weakened through the loss of a cheap labor force which they are unable to replace.

B.2 Accelerated Migration, Changed Migration Paths, and Change in Composition of Migrant Population

In the sedentarized areas, the drought has accelerated migration and created seasonal absences of longer duration. For example, in the Assaba region the active male of the household confers the responsibility of his household to inactive males until the time at which, money accumulated, he obliges the women and children of the family to follow. Temporary migration, regardless of duration, is still more desirable than emigration. Even though household production potential may no longer exist under drought conditions, it is preferable to retain the family at the village because of: 1) the sentimental attachment to homestead; 2) investment in buildings and rights to land; and, 3) the relatively higher cost of maintaining the inactive members of the family in the urban environment.[1] The family in the bush can live on minimal requirements and food aid supplements. Once in the city, the family is also surrounded by friends and relatives whom they are expected to support financially.[2]

Not only has outmigration accelerated, but the routes of this migration have altered. Where much seasonal migration of Bidan and Toucouleur especially was directed toward Senegal, much of the new migration is toward Nouakchott, offering administrative and commercial employment, and Nouadhibou, offering military, fishing and port employment.[3] Very few of these migrants obtain salaried employment. Rentier and large-scale commercial activities are the privilege of

---

[1] Paraphrased Kiffa Interview, Ahmed Salem, 21 June 1980: "I used to come to Kiffa from time to time in the dry season for extra money. My family has nothing in the bush now - no crops - and this year, the last of the animals died. I was obliged to bring my family here, since they couldn't support themselves in the bush. Fortunately, we can stay in the house of this relative. We can't go to Nouakchott even though we find no work in Kiffa; I can't go to Nouakchott and leave my family here because they don't have enough to live on without me. We are attached to the Assaba. We were born here."

[2] Diop, p 131: "Ces personnes qui vivent auprès des migrants, avec lesquels elles forment des groupes de consommateurs effectifs, constituent des charges beaucoup plus lourdes et permanents que celles qui sont au Fouta."

[3] Colvin, pp 283-286: "Le trait caractéristique le plus frappant de l'urbanization en Mauritanie est sa forte concentration à Nouakchott, centre administratif qui a très peu d'activités productives."

a small Bidan group.[1] The characteristic of the 1960s Toucouleur migration to Dakar was also a lack of employment specialization. According to the PUF study, once a certain degree of specialization is reached, the migrant Toucouleur tends to install himself more of less definitively.[2] Most of the new Nouakchott migrants have not shared this long-standing migration pattern, or its subsequent opportunities for gaining stable employment.

Another flow of seasonal migration corresponds to trade patterns induced by the system of tariffs and price differentials imposed on Senegalese, Mauritanian and Malian import goods. Some categories of alimentary goods, medicines and cloth demanded by Nouakchott's burgeoning population are available more cheaply in Dakar, while other categories of the same set of commodities are less expensive in Nouakchott. Likewise, tea and sugar are cheaper in southeastern Mauritania than in the adjacent region of Mali. The Dakar-Bamako train also provides the opportunity to deliver certain Senegalese consumer goods at a lower price overland than can be provided through Mali. Also, the difficulty in obtaining foreign exchange encourages travel to Senegal or vice versa in order to procure commodities, while the sale of commodities also provides foreign exchange. This trade is both facilitated and augmented by a continuous flow of migrants and travelling merchants. A final Senegalese-directed flow is constituted by refugee Haratin, and because of political connections in Mauritania, this may be both permanent and unidirectional.

The geographical breadth of international migration is immeasurable. Studies have indicated the importance of the resulting revenues as crucial to the Mauritanian economy as a whole:

> The authors of the IDEP study estimated that monetary transfers linked to migration for the whole of Mauritania in a recent year totalled 1 billion 450 million CFA or 290 million UM. This same study showed that this figure is higher than the average annual aid in loans and grants received by Mauritania in the years 1963-1968. (War on Want, 1977, p 54)

---

[1] Colvin, p 283-286: "très peu d'immigrants on été intégrés dan le secteur salarié. Au contraire ils ont cherché des débouchés dans le secteur privé: le commerce, les emplois sub-alternes, la vente d'eau... la speculation immobilière." See also Samir Amin, Neo-Colonialism in West Africa, 1973, pp 77-78: "20,000 salaried employees of which 5400 are mines, 4000 are private, 4000 are administrative and 2000-plus are merchants." Today, the mine figure has decreased due to shutdown of Akjoujt mines, and the private figure may be lower due to collapse of sugar and oil-refinery operations.

[2] PUF, p 249: "une fois que le Toucouleur atteint un certain degré de spécialization professionnelle, il se fixe plus ou moins définitivement là ou il a un emploi stable."

Apparently, migration now provides the singlemost important revenue source to the aggregate population and more than is provided by services, aid or the moribund agricultural sector. For most households, there is little alternative to migration.

The drought has emphasized the importance of migration to the economy, modifying its direction and the composition of the migrant population. In Nouakchott, especially, various ethnic groups and castes compete for similar lines of occupation. The class configuration may reproduce itself in the spatial pattern of settlement, where Haratin and established riverine populations assemble in the center of town and Bidan inhabit the periphery, yet there is not precise neighborhood breakdown by ethnic group. There may be differentiation within the principal sector, between Bidan large merchants and Haratin petty merchants, yet Toucouleur/Peulh as well as Bidan/Haratin engage in commerce. Unlike among Dakar migrants, there is little ethno-occupational specialization. This is perhaps due to the overall low level of primary and secondary productive activity in Nouakchott.[1]

B.3 Sedentarization in the Interior and Orientation to the Road and Market Outlets

Sedentarization along the paved road and in roadside towns has not necessarily brought increased productivity to these towns. Previously, the towns' economy was characterized by exchange of products - they were, in a sense, trading posts. Currently, diminishing production opportunities around these nodes means that they are primarily outlets for Nouakchott-origin imports and services distribution (such as food aid). There are comparatively few Mauritanian products that are carried in the reverse direction.[2]

At the same time, the towns themselves offer few employment opportunities for their growing populations. In the summer of 1980 in Kiffa, the only salaried jobs consisted of temporary employment with the MENDES road construction company, well-digging for the SONADER project, mechanics work at garages, and bureaucratic posts filled by appointees. The local livestock production is relatively low, and large sales occur only seasonally, or previous to holiday festivities. A market for artisan goods and imported Malian goods for expatriates also exists.

---

[1] Bidan women do tend toward import-export cloths and veils, and river women toward local food, vegetables, tinted cloth and pagnes.

[2] Freight trucks returning from Kiffa are often empty. Some large livestock traders can affort to rent vehicles for transport. Otherwise, these freight trucks carry friends and small merchandise of friends or run with no return cargo. In Kamour and Guerou, the import commerce is monopolized by one or two merchants, and the domestic production is circulated in the town. In Kamour, oasis production of vegetables reputedly stopped completely because of lack of market outlets (June-August 1980).

The Kiffa marketplace, during a great percentage of the year, is more an expression of severe supply and demand irregularites and disguised unemployment than an example of a thriving market center.[1] A few licensed merchants monitor chains of indebted petty merchants and vendors. Most of the activity is therefore confined to redundant circulation of goods and inflationary circulation of money.

Rather than differentiation by products,[2] there is differentiation in the Kiffa market by quantity of good, caste and sex. The wholesalers, mostly Bidan, possess import-export licenses and distribute on credit to medium-sized retailers. These merchants pay taxes as a function of profits below a fixed ceiling. Retailers, also Bidan, distribute on credit to table and street vendors who are predominantly Haratin women. The rental of a boutique costs 400 UM/month, whereas table vendors and street vendors, if located by the authorities, pay a daily tax of 10-15 UM. Large wholesalers buy from Dakar through Nouakchott, or if business connections permit, through Mataam, in order to cut taxes and price differentials (Interviews, 16 August). Credit relationships between the wholesaler and retailer are based on a client relationship and are repaid seasonally. Wholesalers, and retailers to some extent, may profit from seasonal price fluctuations on credit extensions to other retailers and consumers.

The vast majority of retailers and small vendors purchase from retailers or wholesalers daily on credit and reimburse daily or weekly. Since they cannot speculate on price changes, possessing no stock and selling small quantities, they sell by variable units - glasses, cans, boxes - in order to retain benefits. This is illustrated by the fact that the vendors, when asked during what period their profits increase, responded that "the more I sell, the more benefits I have, regardless of season."[3] In other words, they perceived profit as related to quantity rather than cost/sales price per unit. Because these women purchase (on credit) and sell daily, the ratio of the cost to sales price per unit remains nearly constant. Unable to stock goods, they cannot decrease their costs, but rather, adjust their sales price to incremental cost increases. After reimbursing the merchant and paying their daily tax, the small vendors pocket, on the average, 50-100 UM a day.

---

[1] Kiffa merchant, 19 August: "Ce n'est pas un marché, ce n'est pas le commerce qu'ils font, c'est une occupation du temps ... le sous-emploi."

[2] ..excepting charcoal, henna, beauty products, and local spices, usually Haratin, and beauty products, usually Bidan. Even these also sell alimentary products.

[3] Kiffa, 23 June/16 August: Haratin and Peulh women, sellers of charcoal, tobacco, henna, oil and millet.

Other examples illustrate the difficulties of locating employment.[1] Some Haratin women's daily occupation is to draw water at a 10-20 minute walk from the market, selling it at one to two UM to a vendor who sells it at two to three UM an empty can on the market. A Haratin man works as a bread seller on the morning run. The baker employs evening and morning errand boys to walk supplies of bread to retailers around town. Retailers, in turn, employ subvendors for the market and for independent clientele. The small vendors and errand boys are not paid by the quantity they sell, but in a lump sum: 50-100 UM a run. A house servant's job, highly prized, yields 1000-2000 UM/month.

B.4 Aid Dependence in the Interior

The overall scarcity of wage employment in town and declining productivity in the countryside mean that the dry season migrant finds no income in town and the dry season villager has no stocks from which to subsist. Both the town dweller and the villager become dependent on credit and on food aid distribution. In some cases observed around Kiffa, entire villages subsist on food aid distribution, their herds now depleted and field harvest negligible. Although absent male family members send goods or money sporadically, the villages, composed of small children, elderly men and women, subsist daily from stocked grain and milk donations and credited tea and sugar. In these villages, men and women stated openly that if it weren't for food donations they would have left long ago, having no economic activity whatsoever to retain them.[2]

Relocated in the nearest roadside town, with no relevant skills, capital which can be carried on the back of a donkey, and few employment opportunities these people are once more reliant on food aid. For the Bidan, the manual or service positions are distasteful and unknown. In town, at least, the Bidan can request charity and tribute from other castes, as expected through the traditional system of mutual obligations:

---

[1] Kiffa, 22 June, Haratin family: "Those with a profession have the hardest time ...Mendes, SONADER, Hydraulique have already recruited. Those willing to perform servile tasks at least can find a job ...men make charcoal, women sell it, men work as guardians for functionaries at 1000-2000 UM a month. That's pretty good. There are bakery boys who get 50-100 UM a run. Women sell beads, tobacco, charcoal. Others draw water, sell it to vendors at 1-2 UM, and the vendors sell it at 2-3 UM a Celia can. Others pound millet for people at a few UM a day."

[2] The common assertion concerning food aid distribution is that it attracts the rural population to urban centers where food is supplied free or at a subsidized price. The other aspect of this service, however, is that delivery of food supplies to isolated areas allows people to continue to inhabit nonproductive lands which otherwise might be abandoned.

> We are from a noble family. Our sons are religious. We do not know work. We had animals and slaves; we lost them and came to Kiffa. People give us money, food, clothing because we are respected; they give to us from the duty of Islam. Usually people try to show themselves capable. Instead we have told the truth. We do not know work. Only the truth can have a positive result. The truth is of Allah (Kiffa, 20 June).

For these people, living from charity of food donations is less onerous than working manually, as charity does not threaten their sense of honor and respectability. They have chosen to live in this manner.

C. Effects of Migration and Drought Pressures on Women's Economic Activities and Position in the Household

C.1 Rural Conditions

C.1.a Enforced Immobility of Bidan Women

The ideal Bidan woman is inactive and decorative, physically immobile and verbally expressive. The Bidan interpretation of Islam, rarely dictating the seclusion of women, nevertheless encourages her protection from vulgar public eye. The Bidan's skills, because of the widespread use of slave and servile labor in the field and range, are those relating almost exclusively to the maintenance and management of the tent and its circulation of goods.

As a result of this ideal, and in the interests of retaining the homestead, the active male usually requires his wife to remain in the tent while he migrates for employment. Confined to the tent left behind she embodies, against the pressures for urbanization, the idealized past. Rarely, however, does she assume the role of head-of-household, family or fraction. If servants are possessed, she performs her traditional task of managing or overseeing their activities so that her young children are provided daily with pounded millet, charcoal and water. Most rural women interviewed perceived that their lives have changed little over the past ten years. On closer inspection, they revealed that their material conditions have worsened and that, as a result, they searched for means to alleviate their situation (Assaba oases trips, Billouwaire, Legrane, N'Takat-el-Wasa).

C.1.a(1) Inertia and Lack of Resources

The position of these Bidan women is best described as one of inertia: unable to leave the area because of social sanctions and the desire of her husband that she 'hold down the tent,' she is now, as a result of the declining productivity of herds, date groves and oasis agriculture, relegated to a

precarious subsistence level. Nor is there evidence of significant rural investment by either individuals or government services, aside from construction, by youth and hired labor, of banco (clay) buildings. Where there is an investment by the Agricultural Service, it is often ill-sustained or abandoned: "The Agricultural Service bought us vegetable seed three years ago - that is the only time they came - but we didn't know what to do with the seed, and then we had no tools." The seeds are still stored in an adjacent building (Legrane, June 1980).

The exception to this rule is the Haratin village where women, acquainted with agricultural production, suffer instead from declining productivity and limited effective demand for their produce. Their techniques are rudimentary and their vegetable crop, produced after the grain and legumes crops, is ravaged by animals and pests, and requires tedious daily hand watering. The women of Oued Rhoda stated that their work now encompasses some men's responsibilities, such as clearing, enclosing and transporting. Their foremost problem is the low remuneration of their efforts. Since they are not great consumers of vegetables, they produce them for the Kiffa market. The major consumer of Kiffa vegetables is the MENDES road construction company (Kiffa, 16 August). The vegetable crop of the surrounding areas attains the Kiffa market simultaneously, so that following the production season there is a seasonal glut of effective demand. In village after village, women claimed that much of their crop is lost in the field, another percentage is lost during transport to the market, and a final percentage rots on the market. For this reason, some have ceased to produce vegetables (Kamour, N'Takat, Oued Rhoda, Billouwaire). This is true not only of villages isolated from the paved road, but of those lining the road, or enjoying access to easily travelled transport routes.

The woman producer of vegetables has two choices: 1) if transport is available to her, she can market the whole of her harvest in Kiffa, at a low 'glut' price and a risk of absolute loss; or, 2) she can sell small quantities to intermediaries who purchase at the field at a relatively lower price than is attainable at the market, over a longer period of time. The advantage of the intermediary sales over the producer sales is that the intermediary can monitor market conditions and enjoys a certain relationship with a clientele. The producer who markets must sit for a longer time on the market, with a risk of no sales, while her other fields go untended. Thus, three basic factors inhibit the profitability of vegetable production: 1) limited effective demand which leads to price slumps at harvest points; 2) no producer capacity to stagger market sales or monitor market changes, through production changes or preservation;

and, 3) adverse supply conditions due to animals, pests, techniques and transprot. The investment necessary to alleviate these conditions is far beyond the capabilities of the regional Agricultural Service.[1]

C.1.a(2) Breakdown of Caste Division of Labor and Sporadic Income-Earning Activities of the Bidan

The loss of servile labor, the uncertainty of receiving money and goods[2] on a regular basis from absent male migrants, and the visible examples of Haratin vegetable sales have in some ways undermined the isolation and distaste for agricultural labor that has prevailed among Bidan women. The men and women of Legrane described succinctly the changes of the past ten years:

> Before the drought, we were fat and tranquil (i.e., desirable and content), but the men exhausted themselves during the drought searching for pasture and water, ...now, the men are useless and live from our fat. (Translated Ahmed Salem, my own paraphrase)

Although little agricultural produce is provided by these women, oasis women attempt by various methods to procure income through the sale of henna, mint and the artisan products which are their specialty. These occupations engage them only periodically, and in order to fill specific income gaps. Although a tent can be produced by five women in a day, and a large-sized mat in two months, their production often occupies a week or two, and six-eight months, respectively (comparison ot time figures noted from Boghe, Mondy, Boutilimit, Boumdeyt, Legran). Some Bidan women who are acquainted with the care of weak of sick goats and sheep conduct an intermediary trade in animals if capital permits, although selling from the camp herd is discouraged. They do not actually raise livestock and rarely seel livestock products (milk, butter or skins) because these are currently sufficient for household consumption alone. These income-earning efforts should not be construed as income-generating occupations: they are sporadic and, according to most women interviewed, far from profitable.

---

[1] Discussion with Chef de Service Kiffa: "Existing co-ops (13) are groups of producers, small mutual aid groups, who do not as yet, have revolving funds. We have only 4 extension workers, of poor quality, for the entire region, and one vehicle. Production inputs, extremely scarce, are sold at two-thirds the Nouakchott price yet are nevertheless costly to the producer. Both men and women need extensive full-time training and reliable material support."

[2] In most cases interviewed, sender decided use of money by sending money marked to specific purposes through an emissary, or goods in kind (which negates the hypothesis that these women now enjoy greater managerial freedom.)

C.1.a(3) Non-profitability of Known Skills

The villagers interviewed who were farthest from a market node were those of Boumdeyt. Here, women are relatively secluded and left most responses to questions concerning them to men. The men stated that Bidan women of Boumdeyt engage exclusively in the weaving of mats and fabrication of cushions, or refined skills in keeping with tradition. The women never leave Boumdeyt to sell their luxury mats (20,000 quoted floor price), which are produced on the average over a period of eight months. The mats are carried by travelling merchants who fix their producer price according to their knowledge of the going sales price. As a result of their fixity and isolation, the women have no apparent knowledge of the market conditions for their product. They do recognize that the price of their inputs - leather, straw, tints and tanning substances (usually tree bark and ash) - has increased tremendously or inputs are no longer available locally.[1] They now sell fewer mats at a higher price, and see little opportunity for increasing their production because of both supply and demand constraints. Consequently, their production remains more of a distraction than a source of revenue. (See Table 8)

N'Takat-el-Wasa is an oasis coinhabited by Haratin and Hassani located about 10-15 km from the roadside community of Guerou, and about 45 km from Kiffa, or within foot and donkey distance from the paved road. Although the major cultivators of oasis crops and vegetables are the Haratin women, Bidan women engage in some vegetable and henna production. The Bidan also fabricate mats and leather and plastic key chains for sale in Guerou. Here, the general consensus of both men and women is that women must sustain the household during the men's absence. For example, a woman will purchase leather and food provisions for two weeks on credit in Guerou. Returning to N'Takat-el-Wasa, she weaves a small mat with the help of neighbors or family women from local palm fronds and leather. This she sells in Guerou at 1000-1500 UM, reimbursing the merchant to which she is indebted, and with her profit, purchases Bic pens, plastic and a few provisions. She weaves a dozen penholders in five days, which she sells for food at the oasis or in Guerou. Women state that, where these activities were formerly an income supplement for the purchase of clothing and beads,

[1] Straw comes from the east of Assaba and Hodh, tints are imported from outside the region and tanning substances, derived from trees, are less available due to the drought and prohibition on denuding landscape. Since most animals are marketed on the hoof in Senegal, Mali or the Ivory Coast, leather and other animal byproducts are relatively scarce. This is especially true because of drought conditions.

TABLE 8. An Example of the Comparative Profitability of Tanning and Mat Making

	CASE: TRADITIONAL		CASE I: KIFFA HARATIN, 1980 (Tanned Skin)				CASE II: BOUMDEYT BIDAN, 1980 (6 m^2 Luxurymat)				CASE III: BOUMDEYT BIDAN, 1980 (1.5 m^2 Daily Mat)			
	SOURCE	DROUGHT IMPACT	MARKET PRICE UM	UNIT	# OF UNITS	COST - UM	MARKET PRICE UM	UNIT	# OF UNITS	COST - UM	MARKET PRICE UM	UNIT	# OF UNITS	COST - UM
TANNING														
Materials														
Hide	Byproduct		100	Medium Hide	1	100	c-100[1]	Medium Hide	30	(30,000)	100	Medium Hide	3	200
Ash	Byproduct		10	Meter of Wood	.5m	5								
Bark, pods[2]	Gathered	Resource Dependent	30	Celia Can	1	30	75 avg	Moude	.5/ skin	1,125	75 avg	Moude	.5/ skin	112.5
Water			2	Celia Can	6	12				Res. Dep.				Res. Dep.
Knife		?				Res. Dep.								
Basin		?				Res. Dep.								
Subtotal						147 (+)								
Labor[3]	Servile		(36)	Hour	7	253 (-)						Hour	(21)	
(Imputed Wage)			(14)	Hour		103 (-)								
Salesprice	Barter													
Cited by Producer						400								
Cited at Market						250								
MAT MAKING														
Materials														
Straw/Fronds	Gathered						?	Donkey Load	2-3	1,000		Donkey Load	1	300
Tanned Skins	Traded													
Tints							75	Sachet	15	1,125				
Water										Res. Dep.				Res. Dep.
Subtotal										33,250				612.5
Labor							(-)	3 women -				Hour	(24)	
(Imputed Wage)	--							8 months		(-)	(8.6)		(45)	(387.5)
Salesprice														
Cited by Producer	Barter									24,000				1000

SOURCE: Kiffa Market Prices: Ahmed Salem - Labor time, input information, Boumdeyt prices: Interviewees

[1]Cost if purchased; here, imputed value. [2]Salahaa or dubarg. [3]Remove hair - 4 hours, pound - 3 hours, soaking and drying - 10-12 days, without labor.
[4]Hodh origin

NOTES: 1. The category entitled imputed wage indicates the wage to the producer, since the producer in all three cases is also the seller of the finished product. In other words, the wage was imputed by merely subtracting the total material inputs costs from the sales price cited by the producer and sales price attainable on the market, and dividing the remainder by the hours requirement quoted by the producer.
2. In Case II, the value of the skins is included as the Kiffa price, or the nearest market price for this input. This column shows that mat-making, under market provided skins, would cost more in material inputs than the sales price quoted by producers. In other words, the traditional mat requiring thrity skins is not remunerative if these skins are purchased at market value. Under a market system this mat would simply not be produced.
3. Case III shows that a lesser quality mat produced with only three skins is in fact remunerative to labor, at the meager rate of 8.6 UM an hour under current labor hour requirements.

they are now increasingly necessary for tea and sugar purchases because of men's chronic absence. In this case, women are aware of changes in prices of inputs and in demand for their product through their direct interaction with the market. They vary their products, and are anxious to learn more refined skills. Once again, the immediate problem for them is the high cost of production inputs and the consequent high price of their product, which they find difficult to sell locally.

In Moundi, thirty km from the Boghe market, Haratin women have all but abandoned mat and rug weaving for sale. They simply cannot procure the inputs necessary for production, cannot afford the time to leave the village to sell their product, and rarely encounter a travelling merchant who can offer them a profitable price. Moundi's drylands agriculture has become increasingly their responsibility, and occupies more of their time against diminishing yields. Irrigated vegetable production is not presently a viable dry season prospect, because the water must be drawn from 55 m away.

Another Bidan skill, elementary Koranic teaching, is a highly valued though not necessarily remunerative profession in the rural areas. The payment cited for teaching was 10-20 UM a day's lesson. Others stated that salaries are not requested, but rather, gifts are offered by clients out of respect for their knowledge. The religious Zawaya teacher disdains material wealth and prefers quasi-seclusion. Especially in the rural areas, her esteemed profession is not perceived as work or a revenue-earner, but as an ancestral blessing and social obligation (Boutilimit, May; Boghe, July).[1]

C.1.a(4) Insecurity - The Pull of the Town

Bidan women possess few marketable skills and those they do possess are declining in economic value. As a result, while those women possessing artisanry skills (especially the Bidan) are becoming increasingly dependent on migrant transfers to meet household costs, those women cultivating (primarily the Haratin) see their efforts at sustaining the household declining in value. Both are subject to extreme financial insecurity.

It is for this reason, less than one of choice, that most rural women leave their villages. An older woman explains:

[1] One exception to this portrait is a Wolof Koranic teacher interviewed in Nouakchott, who runs a boarding school for students along with her husband, as well as a restaurant.

> All of the young men have left and if you haven't constructed a house you are obliged to take your wife with you. Married women who stay in the village are told to do so, because of the investment of the house. The worst problem is that these women are obliged to nourish the entire family in their husbands' absence. Sometimes the money doesn't come. It's not the men's fault. When it comes, it's not enough to feed and clothe the entire family. One woman, at her wit's end, wrote her husband saying if he couldn't send more he might as well send nothing (implying divorce). She was tired of taking care of the family and his mother. She cultivated the dieri fields - the men didn't come back this season - staying until the harvest and returning with little harvest. (30 July, Dieo)

The woman explained that while the old women are content with their lives - being too old to change - the young women are tired and angry, often threatening to leave.

Not only is there an objective reason for them to leave (overwork), but there is a perception heightened by tales of the life available elsewhere that in leaving their lives would be bettered. "Each man who comes home chatters of the city as if it were a palace," and the young women, "animated with curiosity, think that pushing for the city is the politics of youth" (ibid). Even in the relative isolation of Boumdeyt, one young woman set to work learning to type, and chastised by her mother and uncle, threatened to pack her bags and leave (Boumdeyt, June.)

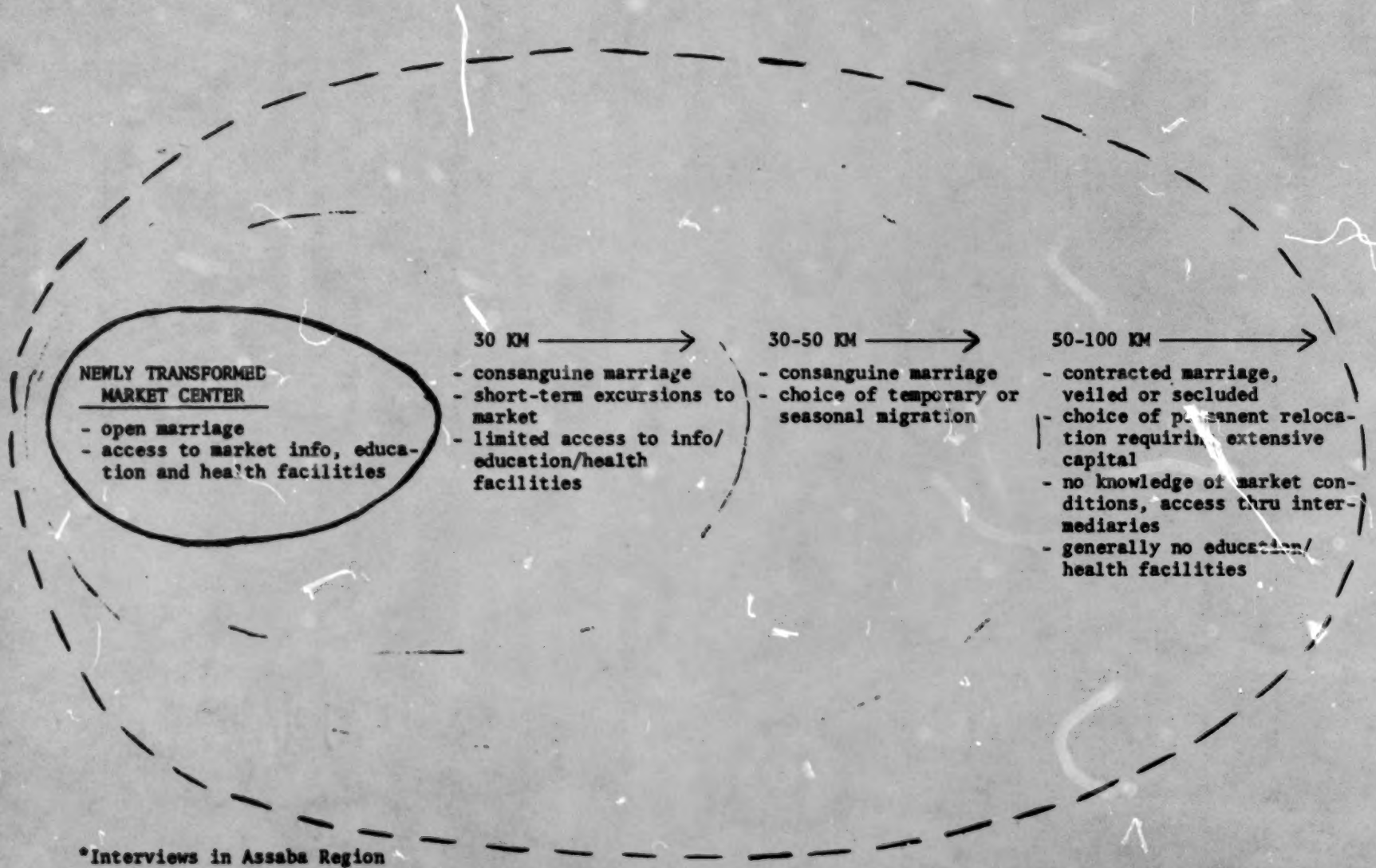
The closer to the "goudron" (the paved road), which is the symbol of the alternative, the more radically opinions on women's behavior change (see Visual Aid 1). In Kiffa, a young daughter of a travelling livestock merchant receives young men in the presence of her mother for tea.[1] Unlike the girls of Boumdeyt, she does not expect to marry a cousin she has rarely seen. Instead, she and her mother will choose from a variety of suitors from her social class.[2] She has a scorn for her bush-sister, and discusses Casablanca and Dakar as freely as she does Kiffa.

---

[1] Tea is a central social custom, around which business, marriage and romance plans are elaborated.

[2] Many young women complain of the lack of marriageable men in the rural areas - a reason for leaving that should not be underestimated!

VISUAL AID 2. Blacktop Road Proximity, Access to Resources and Mobility*


NEWLY TRANSFORMED MARKET CENTER
- open marriage
- access to market info, education and health facilities
30 KM
- consanguine marriage
- short-term excursions to market
- limited access to info/ education/health facilities
30-50 KM
- consanguine marriage
- choice of temporary or seasonal migration
50-100 KM
- contracted marriage, veiled or secluded
- choice of permanent relocation requiring extensive capital
- no knowledge of market conditions, access thru intermediaries
- generally no education/ health facilities

*Interviews in Assaba Region

While the older women see the men's migration and 'holding down the tent' as a source of pride,[1] migration represents a challenge to the young women and part of the rebellion of the youth against the elderly. Still suffering from relative isolation, these young women are unaware of the conditions of the urban alternative. They espouse their cause out of material conditions of insecurity and out of a sense of rebellion.

C.1.b Selective Mobility of Peulh, Toucouleur and Soninke Women

C.1.b(1) Increased Productive Activity of Women and Change in Household and Caste Division of Labor

As consistent with the Peulh, Soninke and Toucouleur woman's integral activities in household production, the accelerated outmigration of men has affected the scope of the tasks she performs and has increased the importance of her activities in the subsistence of the household.

C.1.b(1)(a) Peulh Women's Changing Conditions

In most transhumant Peulh areas, river and Assaba regions alike, women are forced to address agriculture as an occupation because of loss of livestock. Near Sani, for example, some women still accompany the herds during the dry season. A greater number remain at the village cultivating a new set of dry season crops, including vegetables, potatos and melons. During the rainy season, as previously, a percentage of the village men return to cultivate millet and tamarind. Women then cultivate rice, bissap, cowpeas and maize, and contribute the millet cultivation. In this village migration patterns are still well organized: if men do not return, they generally send money so that women can hire a worker for the millet field. Nevertheless, both new cultivation tasks (garden crops), and new preparation (repair of houses and equipment) and management (rental of laborers, overseeing millet field work) tasks have been adopted by the village women.[2]

Among the Peulh interviewed in the Guidimakha, the women have become increasingly dependent on agriculture as a source of revenue. Although they produce okra, millet and peanuts, they consider themselves amateur agriculturalists, and untrained in cropping techniques. They are herders, and having lost the source of this livelihood, have been reduced to agricultural labor, at which they are less successful than the Soninke women. Suddenly,

---

[1] "elles ont l'orgueil en jeu" (Moundi, 17 July).

[2] A similar case is Oulyinge, where in addition to peanuts, millet, cowpeas and rice, women now cultivate vegetables.

these Peulh feel inferior to the Soninke. They also consider that, having the habit of tea and coffee drinking, and not knowing how to fabricate soap, they suffer materially more than the Soninke. Although men occasionally purchase tea, these expenses are the responsibility of women, who now sell powdered milk and work as maids in Selibaby to meet these costs.[1] They no longer enjoy the opportunities of selling fresh and soured milk, butter fats and skins, which is their expertise and preferred activity.

The women of Seyna Kouna still perform little agricultural work. Close to the paved road, they can rely more easily on periodic migrant transfers and the markets in Boghe and Babôbe. Now that meat and milk are less plentiful, women gather great quantities of gidile, lalo and oulo which serve as complements to their diet but which can also be sold on the market.[2] They also trade and sell eggs, potholders and potcovers, woven from discarded foodsacks and straw, to the Europeans in Boghe. Here, as elsewhere, women also perform house repairing and some cultivation activities (during millet/cowpea production) which were formerly the tasks of men exclusively (Seyna Kouna, 26 July, Dieo).

C.1.b(1)(b) Toucouleur Women's New Occupations

Among Toucouleur casted occupations and notably, the artisan occupations, it is difficult to distinguish the effects of the drought and outmigration from those related to the influx of consumer imports, or the subsequent marginalization of traditional crafts. The activities of the women of a blacksmith family in M'Bagne were previously confined to tressing, small jewelry-making, and helping the men with the seasonal harvest of their dryland millet and cowpea fields. As the climatic conditions worsened, these women, seeing that livestock prices were rising, began buying and selling small ruminants. With their profits, they now travel to Kaedi to purchase clothes, jewelry, and food items which they sell in M'Bagne. While the prospects for dieri cultivation have narrowed, these women help cultivate the falo fields lent to the M'Bagne women's cooperative. Although their activities are now more complex and less consistent, these women feel that they have been able to keep pace with change.[3] Significantly, in adapting to change, their blacksmith activities have been abandoned.

---

[1] Translated by Ba Khlidou, Selibaby/Danquéremou, my own paraphrase.

[2] In Theynil, women said that gathering activities had generally decreased because of the drought, yet some of these plants are more resistant than others.

[3] M'Bagne, 28 July.

The change in activities does not necessarily signal the breakdown of caste, as caste is also defined by certain social relationships. A forgeronne describes her profession as travelling to visit Torobe and Fulbe in various urban centers in order to request charity or material support. In return, she informs them of village activities, tresses hair, strings necklaces or bracelets. With her proceeds, usually in kind, she conducts a lucrative commerce of products obtained in urban centers and resold in villages along the road. In other words, the mutual duties and obligations of the traditional social relationship between noble and casted are, here, monetarized.

With the drought, the subalbe, because of their rights to falo land, have found themselves in an enviable position as cultivators, if not as fishermen. The value of dieri and walo fields is in many areas negligible while that of the falo, which can be cultivated year-round under hand or small-pump irrigation, has risen in value. Further, these fields are fewer in number than the walo or the dieri. Both in scarcity value and in economic return, the falo have become comparatively more precious.[1] Profitable exploitation of the river, on the otherhand, has become uncertain, and the subalbe men in Boghe/Theynil have adopted commercial occupations. The Theynil family-based fishing business has metamorphosed into a centralized forty-member subalbe marketing co-op, which purchases fish from a Lebanese company in Nouakchott, pays the transport cost incurred by an intermediate merchant, and sells the fish directly to customers in the market place. Thus, while the subalbe retain their monopoly over the local market, the selling price is now regulated by exogenous conditions - the supplier in Nouakchott and the transporter from Nouakchott. Further, the female occupation of transporting the fish, either directly or through bana-bana (intermediaries), is now superfluous.

Consequently, the decline of the river fishing industry is accompanied by a rise in subalbe women's vegetable production of the falo. The village men, who cultivate fruit trees on the fondé have lent falo/fondé fields to women for cultivation. Clearing, enclosing, watering, planting and harvesting tasks are performed exclusively by women. With their proceeds, they are expected

---

[1] Under optimum conditions, the walo are mostly highly coveted and are strictly allocated under ancestral rights. The dieri, of 'free' access, are often left under long fallow, and are open to clearing and use rights. General estimates of landholding in Boghe, for example, were cited as walo - 10,000 plus hectares, dieri - 'infinite,' fondé and falo - only 1200 hectares. "Most dieri and many walo are now worthless" (Ahmed Salem).

to provide not only sauces, but also some staples such as tea and sugar. Alongside, these women still market small quantities of fresh and dried fish obtained individuall with the help of their children. The men interviewed, while proud of their wives and pleased with their vigorous contribution to the household, said they preferred that the men be the sole providers. The women, although complaining of overwork, were pleased with the new source of revenue.

In one village, the subalbe men lent or 'gave' fields to the women's cooperative which are available to any woman of the community. The subalbe women are generally the fund managers and political representatives of this extremely well-organized cooperative.[1] For the few men who remain in the village, work is temporary and difficult to locate and both men and women complained of the unemployed men 'loafing' in the market-place. In contrast, the women take great pride in their cooperative and have high hopes for installing a motorpump which will allow them to draw water more easily, and for procuring transport which would permit them to market their produce in Kaedi.

According to the women interviewed, the 'success' of the vegetable plot cultivation has incurred some resentment on the part of the unemployed men. When the local authority offered a percentage of food aid to the cooperative as a reward, the men contested. Through their organization, the women rallied the support of a lawyer and authorities who, the women stated, decided in favor of the cooperative. Evidently, the productivity of these women has helped them attain a new bargaining position in the community.

The source of debate at present is that the land, while it belongs to the men, is exploited by the women, and as a result, the deicsions over use of the land and its proceeds are contestable (M'Bagne, 28 July). Further, the women rely on variable supplies of seed, fertilizer and tools, which, subject to priority, are destined first for use on family fields. Their rights over both land and production inputs are uncertain.

The consequences of traditional succession rights are illustrated by a case recounted in another village, where both men and women formerly cultivated millet/cowpeas/corn on the walo/dieri and corn/vegetables on the falo/fondé. When the walo was placed under irrigated transplant rice, and through the encouragement of government authorities, the men donated the falo fields to women. Whereas the women now perform the labor-intensive acitivites on the

[1] Varying opinions were expressed concerning whether the land was given or lent and whether the subalbe women are in fact head administrators.

rice fields (transplanting, guarding, sacking and transforming), they have made vegetable production their exclusive activity with the help of their children. Recently, their request to expand the land under vegetables and enclose new lots was denied (29 July).

Both here and in another village, the women's fields are watered by hand from the pump installed on the men's registered SONADER fields. In this village, women cultivate their own vegetable and rice fields, which are not registered with SONADER. Their primary complaint is that, while during the rice season they can rent the pump and gas from the SONADER, the pump is turned off during their vegetable season.

In each case, women's groups/cooperatives encountered difficulties in: 1) securing land; and, 2) obtaining production inputs. Where the walo has been placed under irrigated rice, its value is once again significantly higher than that of the falo.[1] In Boghe, what had been women's vegetable plots became men's rice fields under the SONADER development project. While women labor the rice fields, the fields are registered by the men under SONADER, and rice as the economic crop is disposed of by men.[2] Here, use of material inputs on women's fields is secondary, so that in conditions of scarcity, as with the case of the pump, these may be nonexistent. Further, in the absence of an economic crop (rice fields), vegetables are a potential source of revenue and the land is vulnerable to reappropriation. In one village, school gardens had been prepared for the use of women and children. Because of their own difficulties in finding remunerative work, the men decided to appropriate the garden plots for their own production.

In order to combat these limitations, women in each case had formed cooperatives for accumulating savings. These cooperatives, as yet, can neither secure their land nor their access to production inputs, unless they have an autonomous mechanism for the provision, protection and delivery of goods. Some authorities argue that distribution of services to men is a more effective use of scarce resources, on the assumption that, especially in an Islamic society:

---

[1]Presently, rice has a wider effective demand and can be stored; falo vegetables have a limited seasonal market and aside from potatoes, manioc and ignames, cannot be stored under existing techniques.

[2]Authorities suggested that once the rice fields began producing, men would return or hire labor for production. In contrast, most laborers cited in the rice fields during transplanting were women, implying that the return to rice production may not be so great as predicted.

1) men are more approachable than women; and 2) men are more innovative. Neither of these are tenable when women are approached by women,[1] or when they are securely provided goods.

C.1.b(1)(c) Soninke Women's Changing Conditions

Tinker[2] writes that "the persistence of sex segregation both in occupations and responsibilities means that even the woman (of the family) is expected to provide food, clothes and education for her children and food for her husband from her own separate budget." However, "as men's earnings have increased through cash crops or urban employment, they often feel no obligation to increase their share of child support." In other words, in certain societies where the division of labor and duties is very strict, the increase of men's income does not necessarily relieve women's burden.

Among the Soninke, the War on Want noted that "women are producing more and more sorghum at the expense of their former traditional crops (peanuts, cotton indigo)," and in some cases, "the total grain production from the women's plots was much higher than that of the collective field" (p 114, 1977). In the Soninke production system, although women theoretically retain rights over the disposal of produce from their own fields, the Kagama may approriate produce in periods of shortfall. Accordingly, as collective yield production declines through systematic loss of male labor, dipping into women's production becomes more necessary in order to sustain consumption levels.[3]

Soninke women in Danquéremou reiterated that it is considered the men's responsibility to provide staple foods and housing. The women claim that money sent back to them is far from enough to cover costs now that grain production has faltered and prices have risen. During the rainy season, they produce soap, weave and tint cloth, weave mats, repair houses, and take care of household ruminants and chickens. They are responsible, in theory, for the provision of soap, mats, clothes and their sauces for daily dishes. In the past, their home production was sufficient to meet these needs. Now, with the decline in productivity of their fields and the scarcity of the tree used for making soap (myrobalan), they grow millet in order to sell it for the purchase of household necessities.

---

[1] While the obvious conclusion may be to provide female extension workers, the same set of problems are encountered among female and male extension workers - unattractiveness of rural environment and unresponsiveness to rural conditions. Moreover, no women are as yet trained in agricultural extension.

[2] Irene Tinker, see bibliographic source.

[3] The War on Want, in order to stem this order of events, secured fields independently for women, encouraging improved okra and vegetable production.

The women of the Katamange village feel that the woman whose production is falling has no more place in the community, and were indignant that the project of the region addresses men as cultivators, but not the women. In the past, however, male extension agents have been prohibited by village elders and marabouts from speaking directly with women cultivators. Further, in the Selibaby area, while the project last year provided the only crop of vegetables, the vegetables could not be sold. While men produced the vegetables, women, unused to the use of these vegetables in the preparation of sauces, felt no inclination to purchase them. The introduction as a men's crop of vegetables for use in sauces is contrary to the usual division of production and responsibility. Since the women prepare and provide the sauces, they must either: 1) be encouraged to produce the vegetables themselves; or, 2) be convinced of the efficacy of using them in their meals, or both.

C.1.b(2) Frequency of Female Outmigration - The Appeal of the Town

The long-standing tradition of male migration from the river region has induced critical changes in household consumption patterns, and in general, a greater exposure to the urban world than is found among the more isolated and secluded northern Bidan. At the same time, as with the Bidan population, the women of the family are considered the guardians of tradition (Interviews, Selibaby, Boghe). Women are seen as a counterweight to the dissimilating effects of male outmigration.[1] For example, children born in the city are usually sent back to the village for their early education.

While interviewees initially denied women's migration on principle, they often complained of their inability to retain young women at the village. For while the young women who leave faithfully return with husbands, or presents and money, once they have left they may never again become an integral part of the community. This was explained by one Peulh village woman as a matter of pride - an unmarried woman who leaves her household is no longer respectable ("elle n'est plus Peul"). Young women who had returned to Oulyinge for the rainy season vacation replied instead that, once they had left the village they were physically unable to resume village activities. In one generation, they had lost their mother's knowledge of livestock care and livestock product transformation.

---

[1] See Little, p 15-28, p 26: "A measure of stability could only be preserved if adult women were kept at home, and it was also realized that if their womenfolk left the peasant systems the men would not return or make further remittances. ..the aim .. was to bind them to the villages as hostages for the return of the absent men."

Unlike men, women leave their home definitively upon marriage and are obliged to follow their husbands and adopt his lifestyle. As more men leave the countryside, more young women follow them. The young women added that the Peulh men of their region, unlike the Soninke men, have a less organized migration system and are less pressured to return to the village. Among the Peulh, there is a potential for open-ended migration, in contrast to the circular Soninke pattern. Consequently, the Peulh woman, unlike the Soninke woman, follows her husband because she perceives no social forces obliging him to return to her.

Discussions with Soninke women verified this assertion. The Soninke man, rather than assimilating French culture, lives in a reconstituted village unit in the foyers (foyrés) of Paris. The extensive savings he is able to accumulate through his frugal lifestyle permit him to send a considerable percentage of his salary to the village. At the village, his status is reinforced by the wealth visible in his family domains. Therefore the Soninke migrates with the intent of raising his status in the village, and through strident competition with his fellow migrants, he remains bound to his village. Soninke women rarely accompany their husbands to France. They leave the village when their husband is uprooted, or when they, unable to marry, are rejected by the community.

In the Toucouleur villages visited, women consistently denied that girls left their village voluntarily. The only acceptable purpose for departing is through marriage, or in extreme cases, the search for a husband. The latter is increasingly frequent because of the scarcity of village men. The other category of women permitted to depart are the divorcees and widows, now free to marry whomever they wish and encouraged, since they are charges to their families, to locate an independent source of revenue.

The fact that a woman's departure is tolerated, but not encouraged, is exemplified by the difference between village recognition of her action and a man's action. A man's departure, met with pride, usually entails the purchase of an animal to be slaughtered on his return. The woman leaves in anonymity, and if she returns with a husband, receives a few gifts from her peer group. Otherwise, her return is greeted with silence.[1]

---

[1] See Little, p 27: "she will have to comply with the very conditions from which she fled ... a male migrant whose affairs go badly may be ashamed to return to his village empty-handed, but this is his only problem and there is nothing to prevent him from trying his luck again."

These social axioms are nevertheless attenuated by a noticeable migration of unmarried young women. In Peulh villages of the Assaba, women bemoaned the great numbers of girls leaving to seek their fortune in Kiffa, Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, ostensibly in search of husbands and support for their relatives: "As soon as she hears she's pretty, she leaves for the city" and "it suffices that one day she looks in a mirror ... the next day she leaves for Nouakchott."

Many of these young women locate husbands, others open restaurants, visiting houses, cardtables or teahouses. Although these activities are strictly prohibited in the village, once in the city, they are preferable to menial labor and servile occupations. To work as a vendor or a maid jeopardizes more seriously the young Peulh woman's self-perception:

> To work in Kiffa is like falling to the level of a captive. You say you are Peulh and people shrug. So women open entertainment houses if they can. They send a lot of money to the village. People know what's involved, but they resign themselves because they have no choice. (Kiffa, 19 August)

The village women acknowledged that they can do nothing to forestall the departure of young girls and now, resigned, they provide them at least with gris-gris (amulets) and a little starting capital.

Other young women from the river who had migrated to Nouakchott spoke of tremendous peer pressure to leave the village. Individuals of their age-set had returned bearing gifts and purchases. They felt a need to accomplish the same and to provide, out of respect for their tireless mothers, a supplementary income. (Nouakchott, 15 June, 15 July)

Once married, they continue to send money home, unlike men, who tend to accumulate savings in order to break from paternal jurisdiction. An old man in Boghe concluded that educating a young woman was more certain investment than educating a young man because the young woman always sends money home. (Boghe, July 29, Peace Corps; see Appendix on transfers to village dependents.

TABLE 9. Some Comparisons of Pre-drought and Drought Production by Men and Women (Toucouleur, Peulh, Soninke)

		PRE-DROUGHT			DROUGHT		
		WALO	DIERI	FALO	WALO	DIERI	FALO
TOUCOULEUR							
Gidali:	Men	Millet, Niebe Maize, Sorghum	Millet, Niebe	Maize, Some Vegetables	Rice, Niebe	Millet, Niebe	-
	Women	Millet, Niebe Maize, Sorghum	Millet, Niebe Melons	Maize, Some Vegetables	Rice[1] on men's fields	Millet	Vegetables
Theynil:	Men	Millet, Niebe Sorghum	Millet, Niebe	Maize, Some Vegetables	-	-	Fruit Trees
	Women	Millet, Niebe Sorghum	Millet, Niebe Melons	Some Vegetables	-	-	Manioc, Henna Bissap, Ignames Vegetables
Dar El Barka:	Men	Millet, Niebe Sorghum	Millet, Niebe	Maize, Some Vegetables	Rice	-	-
	Women	Millet, Niebe Sorghum	Millet, Niebe	Maize, Some Vegetables	Rice (men's & women's fields	-	Vegetables
M'Bagne:	Men	Millet, Niebe Sorghum	Millet, Niebe	Some Vegetables	-	-	-
	Women	Millet, Niebe Sorghum	Millet, Niebe Melons	Some Vegetables	-	-	Vegetables
Boghé:	Men	Millet, Niebe Sorghum, Maize Sugar Cane	Millet, Niebe	Some Vegetables	Millet, Niebe[2] Rice	-	Vegetables
	Women	Maize, Indigo Cotton, Niebe Millet, Vegetables	Millet, Niebe	Some Vegetables	-	-	Vegetables

[1]Cases of off-season corn cultivation on perimeters, presumably by women, have been noted in SONADER projects.

[2]métayage

TABLE 9 - CONTINUED

		PRE-DROUGHT		DROUGHT	
		AGRICULTURE	LIVESTOCK	AGRICULTURE	LIVESTOCK
PEULH					
Assaba:	Men	Millet, Niebe	Herding	Millet, Niebe	Some Herding
	Women	Rice, Maize, Melons, Bissap, Tamarind, Cotton, Indigo	Herding Products	Rice, Maize, Melons, Bissap, Tamarind, Millet, Niebe, Vegetables	Some Herding Products
Danquéremou	Men	Millet, Niebe	Herding	-	Some Herding
	Women	Millet, Niebe	Herding Products	Millet, Niebe, Gombo, Peanuts	Some Herding Products
Oulinge:	Men	Millet, Niebe, Dates	Herding	-	Some Herding (hired herders)
	Women	Millet, Niebe, Rice, Peanuts, Gombo	Herding Products	Millet, Niebe, Rice, Peanuts, Gombo, Vegetables	Some Herding Products
Seyna Kouna:	Men	Millet, Niebe	Herding	Millet, Niebe	Some Herding
	Women	Gathering	Herding Products	Millet, Niebe, More Gathering	Some Herding Products
SONINKE					
River Village:	Men	Millet, Niebe, Sorghum	-	Millet, Niebe, Sorghum	-
	Women	Rice, Peanuts, Okra	-	Rice, Peanuts, Okra, Millet, Niebe, Vegetables	-
Danquéremou	Men	Millet, Niebe	-	Millet, Niebe	
	Women	Millet, Niebe, Gombo, Cotton, Indigo, Peanuts	-	More Millet, Niebe; less Peanuts, Gombo, Cotton, Indigo	

C.2 Urban Responses to Changing Conditions

C.2.a Peulh, Toucouleur, Soninke and Wolof Urban Patterns

C.2.a(1) Breakdown of Labor Complementarity between Men and Women

As a whole, the urban economy does not provide migrant women with the same "safeguards and security" they enjoyed in their rural systems. Despite the declining productivity of rural areas, many women were able to support themselves and their children on their plot production, and "although in the rural system women depend on their families and husbands, both on the farm and in the home, women's cooperation (and work!) is in turn, essential to men" (Little, p 29).

In contrast to the rural work system based on complementarity of men's and women's labor, modern sector workers are chosen on a new set of qualifications which are inherently selective against most Mauritanian women: full-time access, public visibility, literacy or mechanical and construction skills. The spectrum of Nouakchott wage employment opportunities is closed to the generally illiterate (in French) rural woman whose workhours must be tailored around her home, hospitality, and childcare duties, and whose work must not conflict with standards of what is 'acceptable' for women.[1]

Petty commerce and domestic work, for example, are almost universally acceptable among the Wolof and Peulh/Toucouleur. Much commerce takes place in the house itself, such as sales of chilled drinks, ice, packaged spices and cakes. Children often purchase the primary materials and women transform them while performing other domestic chores. Other activities, such as tressing, can also be conducted at home.

Because of men's fears of "spoiled women,"[2] a river woman is in some ways more closely monitored by her husband and her household activities more circumscribed once relocated in Nouakchott. Many river women, having described their extensive cultivation duties as well as their school studies before migrating stated that, in Nouakchott, their husbands refused them both study and work. Education and work (urban-style) make women "curious," which leads to their "ambition," "loss of religion," and even "adultery."[3] Some women echo these projections, adding that obedience to the husband is the principal tenet of married life, and if they disobey their children will likewise be "spoiled," or "ruined" (rattés).

---

[1] Literate women have the opportunity to work as secretaries and clerks, but few have shorthand or accounting skills. A chosen few, educated abroad, hold functionary posts.

[2] The sense resembles more 'ruined' women: "femme gatée."

[3] July, Dieo, "elle a suivi ses etudes jusqu'en CM2. Elle voudrait travailler mais le mari a catégoriquement réfusé. Il dit qu'elle sera deracinée et se sentira en mesure de pouvoir faire ce qu'elle veut ou devenir une petite ambitieuse qui est prête à tout pout l'argent."

Deprived of rural sources of revenue, and denied many urban sources of revenue, women's contribution to the family income decreases proportionally. Women often become distanced from decisions over the use of family income, since this is now provided almost exclusively by men. Some women stated that they are not certain what salary their husband earns, but they are certain he "earns more than he says." They could not take or demand this money, because what the husband makes is not theirs, and interference is tantamount to "theft."[1] In the urban environment, there seems to be a general loss of mutual responsibility and trust because of a new exclusive division between male and female tasks. At the same time, in their evolved roles as hostess and housewife, women depend on daily and monthly allowances from their husbands or sons for purchases.

C.2.a(2) New Urban Networks

C.2.a(2)(a) The 'Secret' Savings Association

Little claims that "there is a system in which illiterate and semi-literate (women) move more or less as a body in both work and leisure time," and in which "even the wives of the elite men take part when their education and occupational position is much below that of their husbands." To Little, this is a world on its own - a universe quite apart from that of men - in which women not only interact mainly with women, but also vie exclusively with each other (p 24). The river woman's response to the curtailing of her activities is to produce a new format for personal purchases, savings and investment. Because of her traditional knowledge of age-set and group associations, she is comparatively well-prepared for the establishment of urban networks. In fact, she is a master at making fifty cents grow.

Significantly, while no river women interviewed worked together,[2] excepting in household and childcare duties, nearly all women saved together. Domestic work and commerce were individually conducted, although commercial activities were often aided by a group advertising and clientele system. The most common form of savings association was found to be the tontine, where money was pooled periodically and the total turned over to the winner of the drawing. These relatively large money flows usually take place among domestic workers, merchants, or women with a substantial private source of income.

---

[1] See Mariem Tall, Dieo Gadiaga, 15-25 June: "le mari lui donne 4000 UM à 3000 UM à garder, elle n'ôse pas en prendre même en cas grave sinon ses enfants seront maudits. C'est du vol et toutes femmes qui volent l'argent aura des enfants maudits. Elle n'ôse pas emprunter quoi que ce soit - son mari n'aime pas une femme qui emprunte." 30 June: "il dit qu'il a un salaire de 11000 UM/mois mais je pense que c'est plus. Les hommes cachent trop."

[2] Exceptions are the government sponsored CPF, PMI, craft centers and wives of same husband who engage in joint commerce.

The more interesting method is what may be called the fifty-cent (20 UM) association, found, be definition, among married women. Women are usually given a small sum of from 20-50 UM/day for sauce purchases, while men purchase the monthly rations of staples: rice, sugar, oil. From this daily allowance women occasionally set aside a few UM which they place in a common stock. This stock may be used for a variety of purposes, including household necessities such as soap, as well as items such as thread and cloth which the women may tint or sew for sale. One example, provided by a Toucouleur woman who receives 100 UM/day for special expenses, is a group of twenty toroobe women who set aside 90 UM each month in order to buy thread and Mélicanne cloth (at 40 UM/meter). The twenty women sew pagnes (skirts) individually and sell them individually at 700 UM/pagne, on the average. The revenue from the commerce is retained by each woman (Nouakchott, Dieo, July). Through these associations, money can be accumulated for capital purchases, such as sewing machines, and materials, such as expensive cloth, which would ordinarily be beyond the buying capacity of the individual woman.

C.2.a(2)(b) Social Support Networks for Divorcees, Unemployed and Less Wealthy

Other examples illustrate the importance of these associations in sustaining women through difficult times, such as a period during which a husband is unemployed. A Toucouleur/Wolof woman recounted that she is a member of a group of seven women who "set aside 20 UM/person each Sunday." The women "have tea and talk out household problems and life today." When someone has a baby, each gives 100 UM to the woman, and "if one of the women's husbands is unemployed or she has problems, the other six donate rice, oil, soap and some money" (Nouakchott, Dieo, 30 June).

For the divorcee, in particular, these associations provide a critical material support. For the married woman, they are supplemental to the allowance she receives from her husband and her own benefits from any other commerce in which she may engage. The divorcee usually has no such daily allowance.

The associations also allow for women to share the use of goods which a wealthier woman may possess. One group described by a khordo is composed of women who sew kits for baptisms, which include clothes, soap, combs and perfume for the baby. The woman who owns the sewing machines works as a salaried employee. After their sales, they divide the revenue in five parts, the fifth part ceded to the owner of the machine (Nouakchott, Dieo, 2 July).

C.2.a(2)(c) The Travel Support Network

In response to the social exigency of returning to the village with gifts in hand, the typical association includes porvisions for travel subsidies. One such organization numbers over one hundred women, or a majority of the women of the quartier. The oldest woman of the group is charged with financial responsibility for the association and lives in the center of Nouakchott. Monthly, each woman pays 20 UM to the central fund. The fund disburses money for births, baptisms, marriages and funerals as well as for travelling. On each of these occasions, each woman must also contribute an additional 20 UM. Thus, for example, a woman who is travelling to her village withdraws 500 UM from the central fund and receives 2000 UM from members.

Another example is an association composed of Soninke women, all of the same age group and from the same village:

> This association consists of each woman donating 200 UM for the woman who returns to M'Bout so that she will have the money to take goods with her. At each baptism, too, members contribute water, rice or soap according to their means - money is rare, in this case. If a woman's husband is unemployed or doesn't support her, the other women each give her 200 UM so she can return to M'Bout until her situation has improved. (Dieo, 7 July)

In other words, the purpose of traditional associations has broadened to include the demands placed on women by their urban lifestyles. Although the groups may often be composed of women of the same village or class, they are not by nature exclusive, although they are confined to ethnic group.

C.2.a(3) Strengths and Strains of the Extended Family

The ability of migrant women to provide food and clothing for the household through her own field labor is eliminated in the urban area. Simultaneously, her monetary needs grow because of the continual flow of friends, visitors and relatives who often use her house as a starting base while seeking employment.

Most of the women interviewed listed people residing in their homes who were not of the immediate family. Many of these are unemployed and are not expected to contribute to household necessities. Although she may complain of overwork, nourishing these people and receiving guests is one measure of a woman's respectability. The hours consumed in this social protocol are extensive - so much so that many women, when asked their occupation, state in first order of importance, "receiving visitors." This task is not confined to more affluent women, but concerns women of any social class and income group.

Further, as the privileged citadines (city-dwellers) of the family, women are expected to send money and goods to their rural relatives. Women's expenses generally included a substantial percentage of their own income destined to the rural family.[1] In some cases, of course, the family was charged with raising small children, and overseeing animals belonging to the urban woman. Often, women recounted as well that they received a percentage of the harvest from the family lands. In short, the extended family is at once a material support and a material drain. New tensions evolve when the family is geographically divided and financially divided into rural-subsistence and urban-wage-earning counterparts.

C.2.a(4) Exogamy/Polygamy Variations

In Fouta society, marriage is more a union of families, or lineages, than it is one of individuals. Through marriage, alliances are sealed and lineage domains consolidated. In the 1960s, Diop noted among migrants in Dakar a diminishing propensity to marry within the family, yet for the first marriage especially, a stubborn respect for intraethnic unions (p 185). Women in Nouakchott confirmed that, while first marriages were generally still contracted within the family, subsequent marriages usually involved strangers to the family or other ethnic groups. The first union is a familial responsibility; second wives or remarriages are questions of individual choice.

In theory, the fact that marriage represents a familial contract allows for family mitigation of disputes and divorce. The frequency of divorce is most usually correlated to increasing male migration, which tends to threaten marital stability. However, the PUF study indicates a significant divorce and remarriage rate in the river region before the intensive migration and drought period.

TABLE 10. Number of Marriages Contracted by Ethnic Group (per 1000 women of each ethnic group)

	0	1	2	3	4	5 +	N/A
Toucouleur	48	659	229	44	12	3	5
Peulh	37	647	231	53	13	5	14
Wolof	72	699	209	14	3	-	3
Soninke	67	789	111	25	3	-	5

Source: PUF, p 35

[1] Dieo, 18 June: "de temps en temps elle se paie des parures (or) et elle le fait très rarement puisqu'elle doit envoyer obligatoirement 4000 UM/mois à ses parents, plus les habits et la nourriture. Elle doit aussi nourrir 6 personnes qui vivent chez elle a Nouakchott."

Apparently, other instigators of divorce are inherent to the valley marital institution. Considerable social pressure is placed on women to marry at an early age and to marry a cousin. One woman in Nouakchott explained that she "married in order to escape the criticism of (her) relatives. In Fouta, if a woman doesn't marry between 12 and 17 years she risks remaining eternally a young girl. Men fear old maids" (Dieo, 15 July).

It is also considered preferable for a woman to live in a polygamous household than to 'vegetate' outside any household. Likewise, it is preferable for a first wife to accept a second wife than to request divorce. By remaining in the household she: 1) respects the familial bond; and 2) is assured continued material support. Women recounted that their husbands decided to take second wives primarily because either the first wife had given them no children, or the first wife, unchosen, was no longer desirable. In principle, the first and second wives are not co-wives, in the sense of holding equal standing in the household, but co-workers, since they share household duties. The first wife, 'promised,' is the symbol of familial union and the matriarch; the second wife, 'chosen,' holds less seniority in the household and less power within the family.

In reality, some women work well together and enjoy a mutual respect. A Nouakchott interview was held with two wives who share an ice cream business and divide equally their receipts. On the side, one woman is a hairdresser and the other, a laundress. In Kiffa, three women - one Haratin, one Bidan and one Toucouleur - run a boutique lent them by their husband (Dieo, 23 June, 16 August). Women can, in some cases, benefit materially from a polygamous household situation.

Mutual work responsibilities, however, are a thin disguise for competition for the husband's favors and for recurrent distrust. When co-workers were interviewed separately, they often enumerated differentiated money receipts from their husband. For example, a first wife, after six years of marriage, receives 260 UM for daily expenses and 100-200 UM as an allowance from her husband. The second wife, newly married, receives 460 UM for daily expenses and 2000 UM at the end of each month for personal expenses. First and second wives share water, gas and soap costs. The second wife, with her 2000 UM supplement, is able to purchase jewelry and clothing. The first wife has no children, the second has one child (17 June, Dieo).

Another woman decided to accept a second wife because of the need to support her children. The second wife earns a good wage as a maid, the first wife sells iced bissap from the house. The first wife "hides her money in a place she alone knows and pretends that all of her profits from her small bissap trade go toward daily expenses." From time to time, "she buys a ring in N'Galam ('more precious than gold')." The second wife "thinks she has nothing" (8 July, Dieo).

The mistrust inspired between wives and between wives and husband is, in turn, underscored by the prospect of divorce. Divorce rights, variable by case, are not necessarily reciprocal. In some cases recounted, women requesting divorce were obliged to reimburse their brideprice (Mariem Tall, 14 July, and Review Session, Tall, Dieo, Awa, 7 August). In cases where women requested divorce, children of all ages beca[illegible]he responsibility of the men. Through divorce, a woman risks losing her children, her land, housing and savings. Finally, she risks social stigma.[1]

While these problems are aggravated by the fluidity, mobility and financial insecurity of the urban environment, they are by no means defined or created by new conditions. In a geographically separated family, the family certainly has less say in the choice of spouse and less influence on the marriage itself. Formerly, "both family groups had an interest in keeping the marriage intact," whereas today, "there is less pressure on the couple to maintain the marriage" (Little, p 165). The essential question, however, involves protection of fundamental marriage and divorce rights now that the traditional institutional framework for negotiating familial disputes, has, in many cases, dissolved.

---

[1] Women's responses indicate certain underlying themes concerning divorce and polygamy difficulties. One woman states that, as a woman, she must "follow the orders of her husband," and although she dreads a second wife, she must accept her husband's choice "because things have always been this way" (Mariem Tall, 19 June). Another woman bemoaned the loss of her children after divorce, while admitting that "the children are the business of their father and I haven't dared speak of the problem because it concerns only the head of the family." She continued, "if a woman requests divorce, she must repay her brideprice" (Mariem Tall, 16 July). M'Bagne, 28 July, Dieo: "ses amies vont jeter les flèches ... mais, la plûpart de temps les vieilles les acceptent."

C.2.b Bidan and Haratin Patterns

C.2.b(1) The Lure of Commerce, Management and Real Estate

Elise Boulding contends that, because the worldview of the nomad encompasses "the greater context, 'she is' able to perceive possibilities of alternative modes of exploiting environmental resources over wide geographic areas."[1] The broad spatial characteristic of nomal life is reproduced in the nomad as a contempt for distances and a disdain for the circumscribed sedentary life. In this sense, entrepreneurship over long-distance is a natural talent of the nomad.

Some Bidan women, gifted with a knowledge of camp management and accustomed to minding the daily business of the goods exchange and distribution among its members, have developed a business acumen which is easily transferable to urban small business management. Other Bidan, posessing their own land and herds, have profited from sedentarization by investing their private capital in real estate. Toupet confirms that during the 1960s in Moudjeria, "eight out of ten houses were constructed by women who had abandoned desert life in order to establish themselves independently in town."[2]

Evidently, growing rentier investment was characteristic of sedentarization and the commercial wave of the post-independence period. Much of today's urban real estate business is conducted by the more affluent Bidan, and among these, women. Some of these women continue to inhabit inexpensive tents alongside the more occidental apartment houses and villas they rent, preferring, for themselves, the openness and simplicity of their customary lifestyle.[3]

Witnessing the commercial prosperity of their husbands and foreigners following independence, many women possessing small capital began purchasing perles (beads) and inexpensive jewelry which they sold in nearby urban centers. Gradually accumulating more capital, they bought finer quality beads and jewelry, small quantities of cloth, and artisan products. Presently, the commerce of these women radiates from Nouakchott to Dakar, Tunis, Las Palmas, Marseilles and Mecca. The thriving trade is focused on beauty articles, cosmetics and luxury products of high monetary value in Mauritania,[4] and as a result, serves primarily an elite population inhabiting Nouakchott.[5]

---

[1] "Nomads, Mobility, and the Status of Women," Toronto, August 1974

[2] Toupet, p 382: "huit maisons construites sur 10 l'ont été par de femmes qui abondonnent la vie de la badiya pour s'installer après, en ville."

[3] Interview, 7 August, Aua.

[4] One perle (bead) may cost 20,000 UM; one luxury mat, up to 80,000 UM.

[5] This historical sketch was provided by a wealthy Hassani merchant living in Kiffa, Dakar and Nouakchott.

As an exception to a general rule of caste exclusivity in this commerce, a few Haratin women have entered long-distance luxury trade. A Haratin merchant in Kiffa described her business activities as involving both luxury and alimentary commerce. She trades local artisan products in Mali and returns with gold, Malian spices such as sambara, and Malian artisan products. She also exchanges local artisan products and Nouakchott veils in Dakar for pagnes, cosmetics, and some alimentary products. When asked about her advertising techniques, she replied that publicity takes place in the home among friends and relatives, or a select informed clientele. For example, when she visited Mecca, she carried gifts which became the source of an exchange of luxury Meccan for Mauritanian commodities. This 'invisible' commerce is confined to a small group and flourishes sporadically, or at given times in the calendar previous to the four religious holidays. Subsequently, the merchant opened a local commerce in alimentary products which has a smaller incremental gain, but a more steady flow over time, thus diversifying her risks.

The Haratin merchant surmised that, for Bidan and Haratin women, commerce is not only the most tempting economic activity, but more acceptable as an occupation than cultivating or herding activities. Although this woman joined a local agricultural cooperative, she hired a man to cultivate her plot. Commercial enterprise allows her a refined life, where although she travels long distances, she no longer descends to the marketplace to see her products. Her sales of luxury goods are exacted around tea in the home of clients, and her sales of alimentary products, from a mud house in her Kiffa concession.

In contrast to this woman, many Haratin women arrive in Kiffa with a few goats or a donkey which they sell in order to set up a small vending table in the marketplace. Others work as maids for up to two years in order to accumulate starting capital. Through vending, these women may pocket a mere 50-100 UM/day after taxes and credit fees. As a result, some Haratin have formed joint businesses using literate children as their accountants, for the purposes of pooling capital for the rental of boutiques where they pay one fixed monthly duty/boutique, thereby reducing their losses.[1] The activities of these women are closely scrutinized by SONIMEX and local authorities, who complain of Kiffa's inflationary selling prices. Blaming primarily the masses of small vendors, authorities are attempting to eliminate this tier through taxes. Similar market structures were described in Boghe. A handful of large Bidan merchants with

[1] Kiffa, 16 August.

import-export licenses trade with Dakar/Nouakchott clients and suppliers. The next tier, also Bidan, is composed of merchants who import from Nouakchott alone. The third tier consists of Bidan and Haratin who buy from the second tier medium-sized merchants. The final tier is composed exclusively of Haratin and dispossessed Bidan women vendors who purchase on credit from the second and third tiers. Exceptionally, a Haratin woman may accumulate enough capital to rent a boutique.[1]

The rigidity of the market structure and the exclusive import-export licensing system create a smuggler's haven, in which women are blessed with a remarkable anonymity and invisibility. Travelling long distances for relative petty benefits, they provide a lower cost alternative to consumers of the interior. Some are also craftswomen who, after completing work on a batch of mats and cushions in Dakar, return with a small quantity of consumer items.[2]

C.2.b(2) Persistence of Inactivity: Social and Resource Constraints

C.2.b(2)(a) Social Constraints

Despite the lure of long-distance and petty commerce, neither of which require literacy, vast numbers of women arriving from the interior have no declared economic activities whatsoever. The Nouakchott interviews of 15 June through 16 July revealed few Bidan women with an independent source of revenue - whether unmarried, married or divorced.[3]

Boulding writes that, in nomadic societies of northern Africa, women harbor a contempt for their urban 'enclosed' sisters.[4] Some Moslem writers, in fact, blame the Hellenistic world for the introduction of purdah to the much freer nomadic Arab societies. For secluded noble women, segregation did not entail deprivation, since the women's court was a political forum. For the wife of the city dweller, on the other hand, there was only enclosed space and the women of her immediate family.

---

[1] Ahmed Salem, Boghe, 27 July.

[2] While these goods sell slowly in Dakar, the lower input costs offset decreased sales quantity, so that total profit is actually higher in Dakar than in Nouakchott. (Dakar, 10 July)

[3] For detailed description of Nouakchott Bidan women, see Abeillé.

[4] Boulding, p 14-15.

Some Mauritanians assert that nomadic Berber society has inscribed a 'matriarchal' aspect on Bidan society,[1] with the result that the customary position of Bidan women, with respect to men and their tribal society, is more 'substantial' than that of their North African counterparts. Although nomadic Bidan women assimilated select religious practices from Islam, they have never worn the veil and generally speak freely with men of the family.

However, the Bidan woman's domain is the tent, to which circumference she is largely confined. The tent may move, but rarely the woman from the tent: "woman is of her room until her tomb."[2] In Mauritania, the wife of the merchant, or the woman merchant herself, is somewhat freed from this axiom, yet distance from the public remains a precondition of her commercial activities. For the Bidan, these are conducted within specified parameters.

Not only is physical activity or labor often considered demeaning, but women typically feel mentally, as well as physically inferior to men.[3] Advanced Koranic instruction is the domain of men, even though fundamental Koranic education is highly valued for both men and women. Thus few lines of endeavor are open to respectable Mauritanian women, and within these, only certain levels of competence are permissible. Against these social limitations, there is very little incentive for women to study or work. In fact, working is often described as antithetical to their ideal perception of self.

A variety of beliefs justify the continuation of this norm: fear and mistrust of men, ignorance of how to make money through work and meanness of salaried work. An illustrative example was provided by a woman who stated that she "respects a woman who is able to avoid men, hopes the government rules separate taxes for men and women, and wishes the state would prohibit women working" (Dieo, 6 July). Men, education, work and unrespectability are interrelated.

In principle, "a noble (Hassani) family does not send their children to school, but rather their captives or artisans." For girls, (modern) "school is the worst," since "they return culturally uprooted."[4] While girls may begin studies before marriage, these are often cut short "by their husbands."

---

[1] Le dossier de la Mauritanie, p 162, Ch XVI "La Mauritanienne Feministe du desert"

[2] Adage quoted in Kiffa, 25 August: "La femme de sa chambre jusqu'à sa tombe."

[3] Interviews

[4] Awa, 16 June: Uprooted is translated from "deracinée."

In a group meeting held in the 1st arrondissement, the Bidan women assembled stated quite succinctly that they do not "know work." Even an activity such as sewing may be terminated on marriage and abandoned permanently once the woman is occupied with children.[1]

As so many opportunities for accumulating petty cash are unavailable to women, sources of revenue are often confined to family members, friends, and government services. Women who had no revenue explained that they lived by gifts, charity and credit. One woman, in particular, maintains her family of six by requesting charity in money and goods. In turn, the goods are sold for living money. This woman is married to a livestock merchant, whose earnings are insufficient to cover family needs, yet even where women are married to more affluent men, gifts and sales of gifts provide personal revenue. In fact, earning income in this manner incites approval: "I conclude that this woman is quite courageous ..."[2] The temptation to live by such means is reinforced by the fact that these means are largely acceptable to the society.

C.2.b(2)(b) Resources

The skills Bidan women may exploit in the urban environment include tent, artisan and jewelry-making. Most women have considerable artistic and artisanal talents, but are hampered in developing them by lack of production inputs, lack of systematized training and a declining market for the more precious of these articles. Mats, tents, and cushions for daily use are often fabricated in individual households, and luxurious artisan products are the expertise of the artisan caste serving a small elite and tourist market. The government has established several institutions and small industries for the encouragement of traditional artisanal crafts: the Artisan Center in Nouakchott, the rug factories of Nouakchott, Atar and Boutilimit, and thw Women's Educational Centers (CPF), scattered throughout the interior. Heavily subsidized, these organizations share a common sales problem. They may generally be characterized as conservationist rather than economic investments. Consequently, they attract meager local support.

---

[1] Awa, 30 June: "Before her marriage she learned to sew in a women's center, but one month after marriage, her husband requested she quit because she risked bad ('affairee') activities. Since then she has not worked. She says she can't work because of her children."

[2] Fatima, 9 July: "Je voie en fin de compte que cette femme qui a cette grande famille est si brave ..."

Bidan and Haratin women interviewed in Nouakchott did not frequent women's associations other than these artisanal centers. While family and fraction were a source of material support, working or saving with other women was not considered desirable. A Haratin woman claimed that, while she and several others sell cous-cous at the same location daily, they are competitors and have never proposed purchasing a common cous-cous grinder, sharing labor or marketing tasks, or expanding their operation. Thus, while rural women customarily fabricate tents, mats and cushions together with other family women, the urban woman, once separated from their families, are distrustful of other women. Enjoying no tradition of informal associations that bridge families and castes, the migrant Bidan or Haratin woman is often isolated from other women, and as a result, is termed 'individualistic.'

C.2.b(3) Dependence on Men: Exorbitant Brideprice and Serial Marriage

The final recourse for the non-working Bidan woman is the financial support of men. The Bidan woman is often portrayed as a charmer and the Bidan man as a romantic. Men often pay a significant amount of money purely for a tea ceremony, and in marriage, they are expected to pay a tremendous brideprice (example quoted: 100,000 UM). Following marriage, they are also expected to continually provide gifts, aside from daily material needs. The Chaab categorically states that "a woman who crosses the marital threshold, beyond the expenses she has already incurred, becomes a source of expenditures that ruins the family unit."[1]

On divorce, all the goods conferred to a woman through her marriage are, by honor, ceded to her. Whereas in the desert these consisted of animals, clothing and jewelry, in the urban environment these may include furniture and housing. Divorce, requiring a simple renunciation by either party,[2] is not only prevalent, but in no way viewed as dishonorable. On the contrary, a divorced woman is perceived as clever and desirable: "a woman who doesn't know how to marry successively is not loved by men."[3]

---

[1] No. 1531, 14 July 1980

[2] For the woman, this may take the form of leaving the house for her family or chastising her husband who, paradoxically, is obliged to divorce her in order to retain his honor.

[3] Awa, 18 June: "Une femme qui ne sait pas se marier à plusieurs reprises n'est pas aimée par les hommes."

Ultimately, these social norms permit a veritable marriage market, which, because of the sums of money involved, assumes inflationary momentum in the urban centers where men outnumber women. The Chaab contends that "this puerile behavior works at the profit of none save the merchants," and moreover, "contributes to the economic ruin of the nation." (ibid)

The ease and acceptability of divorce, the mutual mistrust among men and women, the element of monetary exchange in the union, and the serial character of these unions separates them from prostitution by a very thin line. The Chaab states disparagingly that "the execrable practice of prostitution is so current in the society as to resemble an authorized profession," and that, despite Islamic values, those who practice prostitution no longer "feel guilty." The moral questions posed by this phenomenon are particularly distasteful to Mauritanian Islamic ideals.

For Mauritanian women however, the instability of marriage is not a moral question but a question of their survival. Women recount that their 'husbands' paid the brideprice, stayed a short time, never built them a house, and one day ceased visiting them.[1] While the Chaab blames women's insidious spending habits, women generally bemoan the insecurity of their position where they have no legal recourse to bind the marital union. While affluent women can request high brideprices as some guarantee of a suitor's intent, poor women have no recourse whatsoever. Only on proof of fatherhood can a woman request a cadi's legal assistance.[2]

[1] Nouakchott, 16 June; Achram, July.

[2] Assaba, August; see also Abeillé's report.

VISUAL AID 3. Some Determinants of Women's Production Potential in Mauritanian Production Systems Pre-drought and Drought, by Ethnic Group and Socio-occupational Group

PART A. PRE-DROUGHT PROTOTYPE

		TOUCOULEUR				
	PEULH	RIMBE	NYEBHE	WATIUBE	SONINKE	WOLOF
Household Production Unit	Gallé/Foyré	Gallé/Foyré	Gallé/Foyré	Gallé/Foyré	Ka	Keur
Focus of Household Unit Productive Activities	Secondary & Complementary Livestock Activities, some Agriculture, Gathering Activities	Secondary & Complementary Agriculture, Concession Livestock, Fishing & Gathering Activities	Artisan, Entertainment, Occasional Agriculture, Concession Livestock, Gathering Activities	Labor for Secondary & Complementary Domestic Activities, Gathering Activities	Extensive Secondary & Complementary Agriculture, Concession Livestock & Gathering Activities	Secondary & Complementary Agricultu Concession Livestock Activities
Index of Status in Household and Community	Livestock Wealth; Labor Contribution	Landed Wealth; Labor Contribution	Gallé Adherence; Product Quality	Gallé Adherence	Lineage; Landed Wealth; Cultivation	Wealth; Labor Contribution
Marital Norm	Endogamy; Limited Polygamy		Not necessarily endogamous; limited polygamy		Endogamy; Polygamy	Limited Endogamy; Polygamy
Access to Capital in Land or Livestock	Brideprice; Gifts; Milk Sales Savings	Brideprice; Land Use Rights; Crop Sales Savings	Gifts; Product Sales	Gifts or Loans	Brideprice; Land Use Rights; Crop Sales Savings	Brideprice; Land Rights; Savings
Access to Skills	Varied		Varied - mostly craft-related	Varied manual	Varied; cultivating expertise	Varied
Access to Work and Savings Associations	Familial; community		Familial; community; Occupational	Community	Familial; Community	

PART B. INFLUENCES OF PROTRACTED DROUGHT, ACCELERATED MIGRATION AND SEDENTARIZATION

RURAL ACTIVITIES						
Focus	New cultivation activities, new (formerly men's) tasks	New fields/crops, continued labor contribution to family fields	Non-artisan related; monetarization of client support obligations	Monetarization of domestic service, labor and support obligations	New fields, new crop composition, loss of crops	
Source of Household Income	Increased productive activity of women, decreased economic exchange value of women's products relative to value of men's urban wage-earning; subsequent importance of remittances in monetary household budget and increasing importance of remittances in overall budget as cost of living rises					
Source of Household Decision	Inactive males remaining in the concessions; earmarked remittances					
Access to Information, Skills, Production Inputs, Mobility	(1) Less isolated from market information but difficulties in procuring production inputs and market transport; (2) varied cultivating and livestock-related skills subject to declining input availability due to drought and land shortage; (3) confined to concession because of importance of labor in providing subsistence goods					
URBAN ACTIVITIES						
Focus	Paid domestic labor, home transformation and processing businesses; some commerce					
Source of Household Income	Male wage-earning, women's mutual support activities and associations					
Source of Household Decision	Proportional to labor contribution, often declining as women's earning capacity diminishes in urban areas					
Marital Situation	Polygamy strains, marriage insecurity, lack of divorce rights, loss of extended family as a dispute arbiter					

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PART A. PRE-DROUGHT PROTOTYPE

	HASSANI	ZANAYA	ARTISAN (GRIOT)	IZNAGA	HARATIN	ABID
Household Production Unit	Camp/tent	Camp/tent	Camp/tent	Camp/tent	Camp/tent	Camp/tent
Focus of Household Unit Productive Activities	Labor supervision	Labor supervision & Koranic education	Fine leather & utensil fabrication	Tent management, subsidiary livestock activities	Cultivation, utensil repair, subsidiary livestock activities; Provision of water, gathered plants, leaves & wood	Field/tent labor, childcare, food transformation
Index of Status in Household and Community	Political adherence (tribe); wealth; leisure	Religious adherence (Islamic precepts); livestock wealth; leisure	Camp adherence (fraction); product quality	Camp adherence (fraction) & tent adherence (fraction)		
Marital Norm	Serial, endogamous, monogamous				Not necessarily endogamous, either monogamous or polygamous	
Access to Capital in Land or Livestock	Bridewealth; gifts; inheritance		Gifts; savings thru sale of goods	Gifts	Gifts; sharecropping	Gifts; lifetime l use rights
Access to Skills	Supervisory, management some commercial		Artisanal, entertainment	Secondary livestock	Varied manual labor	
Access to Work and Savings Associations	Familial; national political (previous regime)		Occupational	Familial		

PART B. INFLUENCES OF PROTRACTED DROUGHT, ACCELERATED MIGRATION AND SEDENTARIZATION

RURAL ACTIVITIES			
Focus	Supervision, new sporadic income-earning activities	Decline in production inputs & output	Increased labor and income-earning activities
Source of Household Income	Increased dependence on migrant remittances, merchant credit and aid		
Source of Household Decision	Inactive males remaining in camp and absent males		
Access to Information, Skills, Production Inputs, Mobility	(1) Generally isolated except an elite group of long-distance merchants and rentiers; (2) few marketable skills, some Koranic literacy; (3) confined to tent to ensure land and housing claims, social constraints on mobility		
URBAN ACTIVITIES			
Focus	Some real-estate, long-distance commerce, management; high rate of inactivity	Selective production; production in government subsidized centers	Menial labor; petty commerce
Source of Household Income	Male wage-earning, prostitution, gifts, charity, family		Male and female menial labor, petty commerce
Source of Household Decision	Not proportional to women's household labor; both men and women		Proportional to labor contribution
Marital Status	Serial marriage, exorbitant brideprice, ease of divorce		Marital instability

SECTION III. OBSERVATIONS AND PROJECT-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

A. General Observations on the Orientation of Government and Donor Assistance

The major drought-period focus of government and donor assistance efforts has been the provision of food and medical services and goods to urban and rural populations. Women have been addressed, through the extension of health care and nutritional services, as part of a services recipient population. These relatively well-financed programs (see Table 11) have as their principal objective the amelioration of living conditions and, as a long-term goal, the instruction of women in adaptive nutrition and childcare. The Government and donor agencies have contributed major financial support toward enriching this aspect of women's lives (see Appendix 4).

In contrast, projects addressing women as income earners and producers have received meager support. Subsequent to the change in national development policies, the opportunity for wage-earning activities through state-financed industrial investment programs diminished for the population as a whole, and for women in particular. In addition, the absence of a national political forum specific to women has left women without this key institutional means of support.

The nexus of artisan centers opened during the early 1970s is now subsumed under the Ministry of Artisanry and Tourism, whose programs, while sponsoring the development of traditional rug-weaving skills by women, are oriented more towards conservation of traditional artisan forms than toward promotion of large-scale rug production and marketing. The Women's Educational Centers, or Centres de Promotion Feminine, functioning under the Director of Social Affairs, encourage a variety of sewing, embroidering, literacy and nutritional programs under a limited budget. Because the success of these centers in offering remunerative skills to women has been minimal, many of the centers attract slight enduring participation (see Appendix 4).

While both of these organizations receive annual operating budgets as well as occasional donor support, only the Artisan Center received investment budget allocations (and tentatively) under the Third Development Plan (see Table 12). The Government has simply been unable to undertake exceptional investments designed to encourage women as producers, or rather women as a distinct set of producers.

TABLE 11. Second Plan Support to Women:
Investment Disbursement and Project Realization as of October 1976
(Support as Percentage of Total Second Plan Investment)

			PROJECT STATUS		
	INVESTMENT	DISBURSED	ENVISAGED	REALIZED	IN PROGRESS
	(Millions of UM)				
SECTORS INVOLVING DIRECT SUPPORT TO WOMEN					
Health and Social					
National Hygiene Center	16.0		1		
Construction/Improvement of Regional Centers	120.0	9.8	2		2
Nouakchott Hospital	160.0		1		1
Creation of 3 Secondary Centers	12.0		1		
Artisanry					
Program of Arts Office	6.6	3.2	1		1
Subtotal Sector Support	314.6	13.0	6		4
Subtotals as Percentage of Plan II Investment	3%	.3%			
OTHER SECTOR SUPPORT TO WOMEN					
Animation Rurale					
Literacy (outside Plan)	(1.3)				
UNDP Cooperatives and National School	47.0	26.9	2		2
Education/Training					
Nursing Center, Nouakchott	2.2	1.7	1		1
Midwives, Nursing School Extension	-	-	-	-	-
Other	536.6	149.3	23	5	8
Subtotal Sector Support	587.1	177.9	26	5	11
Subtotals as Percentage of Plan II Investment	6%	3%			

SOURCE: Compiled from Tables 3, 28, 29 and 30, 3è Plan de Développement, Economique et Social, Ministre du Plan et de Mines, 1976 (updated 1978)

TABLE 12. Third Plan Support to Women: Planned Investment and Percentage of Total Plan Investment

Sectors Directly Involving Women	Investment (Millions of UM)
Artisanry	
Artisan Village, NH	53.1
Health Education	1339.0
ENECOFA	85.0
Rural Vegetable Production	54.0
SUBTOTAL	1541.1
Percentage of Total Plan Investment	2

Source: 3e Plan de Développement

Other rural development projects, such as the SONADER rice perimeters and vegetable gardening projects, indirectly modify women's field production conditions by changing landholding patterns, introducing new crops and placing new demands on women's and child labor. At the same time, these projects do not directly address the particular set of tenure, input and time constraints affecting women's production and labor. The result is that women's productive potential is altered, but not necessarily improved. On the part of donors, the War on Want project in the Guidimakha offers one apparent exception: here, both measures to improve yields of women's crops (okra) and measures to secure land for field production have been adopted within the project design.

In sum, while women have received considerable financial support in the areas of health care and nutrition, as viable rural producers they have received little Government or donor encouragement. Where rural development projects do address women as part of the rural population, the incentives necessary to increase women's production are lacking.

The more obvious paradox of existing policies is that women who are not aided in producing income cannot be expected to purchase their own food and medical supplies. Consequently, women rely more and more on free services and on migrant remittances to meet rising living costs. The inconsistency and unreliability of remittance flows engenders dependence on credit issued under disadvantageous terms. Women may be the principal users of both free rural delivery services and long-term consumption good credit arrangements since they

are the fulltime rural residents. Extending delivery services, while neglecting productive investments engaging women, merely perpetuates both dependence on free services and credit distortions in the rural economy. An essential long-term approach to the rural exodus requires intensive investments in rural production involving the less mobile segments of that population - or women.

Given the seasonal and pluri-annual migration patterns of men from most rural regions, women and children comprise the permanent population of the village. While the purpose of Government and donor investment in rural areas is to increase rural production, thereby attracting male labor to rural areas, the long gestation period of most of these investments suggests that for some time to come, men will continue to migrate elsewhere in search of more remunerative enterprise. At present, the real rural wage is depressed by stagnating productivity and by consumption imports costs. The search for remunerative employment, given current prices and consumption levels, necessitates migration.

Rural women, who are required to remain with land, housing and children, are necessarily the fulltime residents of rural areas. For this reason, women should be provided with new techniques, training and inputs in order to sustain production in the absence of men and in order to train their own children as future producers. Otherwise, women, like men, may choose to definitively abandon rural areas.

B. Rural Observations and Recommendations

B.1 Access Considerations

Observation (a) - Activities Choice: If offered the choice, many women producers express the desire to learn secretarial and office skills. Among the Bidan women especially, agricultural work under present conditions in unsavory. The former choice is not currently open to rural women because of the customary requirement that they remain on the land, and because of the overall shortage of such employment opportunities in the Mauritanian economy. Most women of any ethnic group have reason to invest their energies if demonstrated the profitability of cultivating activities.

Observation (b) - Access to Land and Inputs: Under the constraints of general capital scarcity in rural areas, the process of technological innovation forges inevitably a new social stratification. In competition for scarce production inputs and land, those with uncertain land titles are residual recipients. Tenants and women fall under this category of producers. Land insecurity inhibits investment in production and often leaves fields uncultivated that may be exploited.

Observation (c) - Distribution of Land and Inputs in Development Projects: The river irrigation schemes have attempted to mediate land tenure insecurities through guaranteeing registered plots to each male head-of-household. Women, who labor these fields as they labored the millet fields preceding them, do not hold registration titles or succession rights. The rice perimeters, replacing family grain fields, are intended to benefit the family as a whole. Women's individual fields still exist alongside these family fields, but the women's fields receive an unsteady flow of inputs, or in some cases, no inputs at all. The produce of these fields is important to family consumption and singularly important to women as producers for their households. In the case of increasing returns to family rice perimeters, the production of these women's fields is marginalized; and in the process of expansion of perimeters, these fields, because of land insecurity, may be expropriated.

Recommendations

Although the distribution of village land resources may not be regulated or enforced by external authorities or donors, both may attempt, through village authority, to secure plots for women destined for their crop production.

The scarcity of production inputs in rural areas derives from both general availability, or supply conditions, and from marketing or transport conditions. In order to ensure the provision of inputs to women's plot production, donors need to aid in supplying inputs and also in deliverying them to women producers.

In some river region villages, women's cooperatives, or savings associations, pool financial resources for the purchase of inputs. These associations neither possess sufficient capital for rental of goods and services, nor the 'credit worthiness' to purchase under long-term credit agreements. Donors might consider aiding in the procurement of goods by subsidizing costs on long-term payment condition, or by initiating credit arrangements.

B.2 Crop Production Considerations

Observation (a) - Technique Considerations (Kiffa Region): The reason for reliance on intermediary sales of vegetable produce is a seasonal glut of vegetables on the market which results in marketing risk. The producers, rather than journey to the market and risk absolute loss in untimely produce sales, often remain on their plots and confer small quantitites to intermediaries who enjoy clientele relationships with consumers in town.

Observation (b) - Crop Choice Considerations (River Region): While there is a greater local market for vegetables in the river region than in the Kiffa region because of consumer tastes, a variety of vegetables, plants and herbs that were previously gathered for use in sauces are not scarce due to drought conditions.

Under optimal market conditions, European vegetables (beans, tomatos, lettuce) fetch a relatively high price. Under seasonal glut, however, their market value drops considerably. Indigenous herbs and plants may not attain as high a price as the European vegetables during certain periods, but these may also be marketed and because they are easily dried or conserved, can be sold over a longer period. Observation (c) - Crop Choice Considerations (Guidimakha): Soninke women produce grains, okra, indigo, cotton, and in some cases near the War on Want project, vegetables. Grains are sold, okra and vegetables provide sauce ingredients, and indigo and cotton furnish the raw materials for cloth production. All of these crops occupy a crucial place in household consumption and in women's sales to meet household costs, such as purchase of soap and clothing.

Recommendations

Means by which to stagger vegetable production and therefore assure pluri-seasonal consumption and sales are necessary in all regions given present marketing conditions.

Rather than concentrate entirely on grain crops or on a certain set of vegetables, projects should explore small-scale reintroduction of a range of indigenous plans as domestic crops.

In the Guidimakha, both grains and vegetable improvement should be introduced to women who are marginal producers of grains and primary producers of sauce ingredients. In this region especially women and children are the perennial rural residents and have a vested interest in improving their yields.

B.3 Livestock Production Considerations

Observation (a): Peulh women prefer livestock related activities to cultivating activities and both Peulh and Bidan women possess some knowledge of household tending and care of goats and sheep. These animals provide the family's milk and sometimes the family's meat. They may also be sold exceptionally to meet household expenses. These small ruminants are overlooked by donors and often disregarded by villagers who do not usually count on them as part of their herd.

Observation (b): For women of any ethnic group, small ruminants constitute a source of transferable and mobile capital which they can accumulate rapidly relative to land and can carry with them on divorce. Under present cultivation techniuqes and marketing conditions, the rate of return of goats and sheep production is greater than to agricultural production for women.

Recommendations

Raising the productivity of these animals would benefit the household during the season in which herds are absent.

The animals are usually fed with wastes or, at best, meal leftovers or food grains. On small concession plots or in garden areas, forage crops could be grown with little labor cost and in small quantity in order to supplement the diet of the animals.

Women complain of the inefficacy of veterinary medicines introduced in the villages. This may be related to the generally poor physical condition of the animals. Veterinary interventions should occur not only with pasture herd-owners, but also with tent or concession animal-tenders, or women.

B.4 Forestry Byproduct Considerations

Observation: Haratin, Soninke, Peulh and Toucouleur women use fruits, bark and leaves in sauce preparation, tanning, dying, and occasionally, soap-making. Many of the trees that furnish these useful products have disappeared in the past few years. These products are not only used in home consumption but may be sold, and comprise a range of products with a potentially high and constant consumer demand.

Recommendations

Forestry design should include observations on these fruit tree products and byproducts along with calculations on fuelwood production and drought-resistant varieties. These consumable byproducts may provide a revenue source for tree-owners which is perceived as much more immediate than fuelwood and soils conservation. Introducing trees that provide revenue reduces the need for other incentives such as wage labor in attracting village support.

Fruit trees may be grown in the concession or near the household and may be easily and regularly tended and watered (with waste water) by household members.

Since women are the fulltime residents of rural areas, introducing tree varieties to them and their children allows for more permanent and long-lasting care of seedlings.

Women know tree byproduct uses and fuelwood consumption levels because they prepare the meals. Working with them in improvements is necessary to the success of the project. Training them and through them, their children, diminishes the need over time for expensive extension workers and formal training programs.

Haratin men are the primary charcoal makers and Haratin women the charcoal sellers. One of the conditions for definitively eliminating charcoal 'poaching' is to provide this population with a more remunerative alternative to charcoal production.

B.5 Market Considerations

Observation (a): In the Haratin cultivation areas around Kiffa, registered pre-cooperatives include female membership. These pre-cooperatives are groups of cultivators who pool savings in order to procure production inputs for both

grains and vegetable plots. In this case, groups need not only ensured provision of production inputs but also marketing organization. The use of intermediaries in marketing vegetables depresses the producer price.

Observation (b): Women tend to have incomplete marketing information because of their relative isolation in both the Kiffa region oases and some villages of the river region. They rely on itinerant merchants to transport their goods for them and sell their goods at the market. Although much information flows through these areas due to the consistent shifting of individuals and families, many women seemed unaware of market conditions and cannot keep abreast of the daily and weekly supply and demand situation at the nearest market node. In some cases women have abandoned production altogether because of inopportune losses enroute and on the market. Women do not have the mobility or the spectrum of marketing and product information that men enjoy.

Recommendations

In the Kiffa region, some aid in the organization of marketing of pre-cooperative produce may be beneficial to the cultivator.

In the oases areas where women cultivate and save individually, and in the river region where women cultivate individually but may often save collectively, marketing organizational aids, accounting aids and investment information are critical to affecting the profitability of cultivation.

B.6 Rural Food Processing and Transformation Considerations

Observation (a): Although drying vegetable harvests would extend the consumption and sales period of vegetables, few vegetables are preserved aside from onions. Potatos, yams and cassava can be stored in the soil until use. Leaves are dried and pounded for use and sale. Dried tomatoes and cassava are not used in cooking in this region, although in Nouakchott dried foods imported from Senegal are used in sauces.

Observation (b): Dried fish is the residual of the daily catch and is used in small quantities in the staple dish or as a replacement for fresh fish in the river region. Dreid meat is used in the same fashion in the interior. Both products are dried simply in house or tent with little labor and capital.

Observation (c): The economic justification for introducing improved drying methods is that foods can be dried at greater speed or better quality to increase the supply which can be marketed in a given period. Presently, the local exploitation of the river is significant during one short season throughout which the demand for fresh fish over dried fish is correspondingly great. While the price of fresh fish may not be high during this season, the market

for dried fish is residual and dried fish price may not be higher than for fresh fish because of consumer preference.

Recommendations

Under given fresh and dried fish supply and demand conditions, it is questionable whether introducing improved drying methods would increase the income of fish sellers in the interior.

Rather than concentrating or encouraging drying of those crops currently exploited in vegetable plots, it may be well-advised to explore alternate crops that can be stored easily, dried easily, or whose production may be staggered.

In either case, market factor and consumer tastes should be carefully examined before introducing transformation or processing equipment. If women have not chosen to transform produce, this may be because there is no market for such products in the interior, while the activity is too time-consuming to merit its adoption in satisfying strictly household needs.

C. Urban Observations and Recommendations

C.1 Employment Opportunities (see Tables 13 and 14 - p 105)

Observation (a) - River Women: In the urban economy, women's production tends to hold lesser importance in the household budget than in the rural areas because while men enjoy the opportunity of procuring wage employment, most women's activities occur in the informal sector and are relatively poorly remunerated. Women are found disproportionately in certain sectors of the economy and generally earn less. The customary decision-making power deriving from women's household revenue contribution is eroded by the widening disparities in revenue-earning between men and women. Many women now purchase their sauce ingredients through daily allowances provided by their husbands. These women are, once in urban areas, distanced from their husband's activities, income-earning and decision-making.

Observation (b) - Domestic Employment among River Women and Servile Classes: The more privileged of the river women, as expressed in wage, succeed in locating paid domestic employment positions which are sought by both men and women. In Kiffa, domestic employment, because it is one of the few sectors open to illeterate and migrant women offers one means by which Haratin women can accumulate savings in order to commence vending activities. In Nouakchott, by comparison, domestic employment, because it constitutes one of the few sectors open to illiterate and migrant women, may be an employment goal in itself. For some groups of women born into servile classes, servitude is not only an economic necessity but also a social institution (Haratin and Khordo). As a social institution, servitude furnishes certain appreciable benefits such as housing, clothing and

medical care by host families. The use of domestic servants is not confined to a small number of affluent families; many middle-income families employ part-time or fulltime servants whom they pay in money and in kind.

Observation (c) - Commerce by Bidan and Wolof Women: Most women of any ethnic group engage in petty household-based commerce. Other women who are privileged, as measured by income, are the long-distance luxury product merchants. These women conduct their commerce around tariff barriers on light consumer goods and around the quasi-monopolistic import-export licensing system. As long as Mauritanian tariff and licensing structures remain intact, this commerce, which represents a drain on state tax revenue sources, will continue to proliferate. This commerce is beneficial to merchants and to consumers since its intent is to moderate price differentials.

Observation (d) - Bidan Dependence on Male Support: Many Bidan women interviewed in Nouakchott declared no income-generating activities. Lacking skills, many of these women are reliant on support from men. The Government has publicly recognized the problems which exorbitant brideprices, serial marriages and prostitution cause for the society.

Recommendations

While agriculture and livestock-related activities are non-existent for most women in Nouakchott, small ruminants and garden plots production are feasible within concessions or neighborhoods. A prime opportunity for encouraging such activities is the new plan to resituate squatters.

Here, land ownership is contingent on planning and care of concession trees. These trees may include fruit trees whose products can be sold. Small neighborhood or concession plant, forage and fruit tree plots production might be explored along with household animal care. Goats and chickens can easily be kept in Nouakchott's concessions.

Small concession or neighborhood plots, unimpressive individually, would gradually contribute to the subsistence of the neighborhood and forestall its potential isolation. Already, women on the outskirts of Nouakchott complain about the distances to market centers and services.

Family plots also have the feature of being owned and tended by the family, which implies greater interest in their maintenance and ease in tending them. In those areas where tenure is secure, some trees have been planted.

As long as no measures are taken to guarantee a minimum wage to domestic servants, underpayment of these laborers will undoubtedly continue. Raising the wage of these workers also implies the need to improve the quality of their work. Programs might be started to modify the orientation of this domestic work by training women technically in childcare and education. Many women expressed the desire to work caring for children, while others claimed that they could not work as long as they had their children to watch. In Nouakchott, unlike rural areas, the option of sending children to a nearby relative does not always exist. Other extensive training or employment programs engaging women also require

simultaneous childcare measures in order to liberate women from these tasks. Although the reception to day-care centers may be generally negative, there is a need and an expressed desire by women for some form of reliable childcare support.

TABLE 13. Estimated National Employment, Potential Employment and Underemployment

	1965	1973	1974	1975
Total Population	1,207,000	1,395,780	1,421,360	1,447,420
Total Potentially Active Population, 15-59, excluding mothers of family	591,740	625,675	637,110	648,755
Total Employed Population	321,300	259,500	263,300	267,000
Modern (including commerce)	31,000	42,300	44,400	46,500
Traditional	290,300	217,200	218,900	220,500
Modern as % of Employed	5	7	7	7
Employed as % of Total Population	27	19	19	18
Unemployed as % of Potentially Active	41	58.5	48	59

SOURCE: p 57, 3è Plan de Développement Economique et Social, Ministere du Plan et des Mines, 1976 (updated 1978)

TABLE 14. Third Plan Estimates of Total Female Population, Active Population and Activity by Sector

	ESTIMATE	% OF TOTAL ACTIVE WOMEN
Total Female Population (TFP)	693,000	
Total Active Women	229,575	100.00
Traditional Sector	227,375	93.24
Herding		43.42
Agriculture		.16
Fishing/Hunting		.40
Artisanry		9.30
Traditional Teaching		.62
Traditional Transport		.21
Traditional 'Domestic'		19.38
Modern Sector	2,200	6.76
Administration		1.44
Fishing		.16
Mines		.88
Construction, Industry, Electricity		.51
Banks, Commerce, Insurance		.16
Transport		.19
Domestic		.22
Independents		3.20
Active Women as % of TFP		33.00
Women in Modern Sector as % of TFP		3.00
Women as % of Total Modern Sector (men and women)		5.00

SOURCE: Compiled from Tables 54 and 58, 3è Plan de Développement Economique et Social, Ministere du Plan et des Mines, 1976 (1973 figures)

C.2 Savings and Investment Networks: Organizations and Associations

Observation (a): River women especially are currently involved in a range of savings and investment networks. These networks are usually located in neighborhoods among women who share a common trust and interest, providing a unique base for small community action.

Observation (b): Bidan, Zenaga and Haratin women do not generally enjoy the same network of community support and find themselves isolated in the urban environment if they are separated from their families. Some Bidan women are capable of providing Koranic instruction in their homes. Others frequent sewing centers. In some cases, Haratin women find support among river women.

Recommendations

River women's associations are not working groups or cooperatives but provide instead ad hoc support to and a continuous flow of information among women. Any assistance should therefore be confined to inputs procurement and technical advice rather than organizational formation. Imposed organizations are forces of alienation.

Existing informal associations are generally ethno-centric and most Bidan and Haratin women have not found them useful. Donors could provide community loci where all women can find adult literacy, arithmetic and accounting courses. These skills are currently unavailable to river women within their organizations and are often cited as desirable by both river and Bidan/Haratin women.

Since adult education courses are not directly remunerative, they cannot be expected to attract immediate and wide-spread interest. Nevertheless, many women are discouraged over the fact that, once married, simple educational and vocational avenues are closed to them. If these courses were organized on a small community basis, they could be adjusted according to community needs and expressed desires.

Some family-managed schools already exist for Koranic education. Adult education courses could be organized similarly, using Koranic educators and women interested in teaching. Minimal operating costs could be subsidized by member contributions.

It is essential not to construe women's adult education as encompassing home economics and nutrition courses alone. In fact, women interviewed in Nouakchott expressed greater interest in accounting and literacy skills or small business guidance. Rather than apply a blank standardized program, it seems more reasonable to begin with each small group's expressed interests. Assistance, again, would be extended primarily in the procurement of materials, tutors and advisors from the community itself.

C.3 Training Considerations (see Table 15)

Observation (a): Most formal educational and training opportunities for women are confined to general secretarial training and office skills. While there is a market for these skills in the administrative capital, women from rural areas especially need alternative training opportunities.

Observation (b): In rural areas, use of male extension workers is not likely to be welcomed by rural women as immediately beneficial to them. Certain sets of women's problems may be better addressed through female extension workers. Currently, young women in some areas express a desire to work in extension positions.

Observation (c): With either male or female extension workers, government institutions often experience difficulty in obligating trainees to voyage to and work in the interior, where the need for fulltime workers is great.

Recommendations

Young women should be encouraged to develop specialized skills to work in agricultural and herding-related extension posts. The curriculum of ENECOFA might be refined in order to offer short-term courses in such skills, and the agricultural school in Kaedi encouraged to actively recruit women.

Young women should be trained in the interior with the intent of working in their region of origin. Courses should be specific (vegetable plot production, marketing, accounting) and they should be short-term. These women may be employed through Women's Educational Centers as agricultural animists, whose duties may not be so much to instruct, but rather, to offer fulltime help in locating clients and procuring transport and inputs for women producers.

Older women in producing villages should be offered the chance of following short-term courses in nearby urban centers for the purposes of aiding their village associations. Similar course preparation has already been offered to midwives and could be reproduced under a slightly different format for agricultural and livestock-related work.

TABLE 15. Secondary Educational Institutions for Women and Other Institutions

	YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TYPE OF TRAINING
Training Instututions for Women			
Ecole Nationale d'Enseignement Commercial et Familial (ENECOFA)	1975	160	-
Ecole des Infirmiers et des Sages Femmes	1976	11	Midwife
		115	Licenced Nurse
		225	Assistant Nurse
		2	Social Assistant
		25	'Matrons'
Other Higher Education Institutions Receiving Women			
Ecole Normale d'Instituteurs	1975	200	-
Ecole Nationale d'Administration	1975	245	-
Lycee Technique and College d'Enseignement Technique	1975	380	-
Other Institutions			
National Agricultural Training and Extension School (Kaedi)	1975	100	-
Professional Training Center (Mamadou Toure), SONELEC Center and COMINOR Center	1975	703	-

APPENDIX 1

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions à poser sur la femme et l'émigration

I. Informations préliminaires

a. Ethnie de la femme interviewée, ethnie de son mari.

b. Age approximatif et lieu où la femme a été interviewée.

c. Situation matrimoniale de la femme (actuelle).

d. Transcription en Pulaar ou Wolof de strate sociale (ordre et caste) de la femme et de son mari.

e. Village/région d'origine de la femme et du mari.

II. Composition de sa famille

a. Nombre de personnes vivant dans: (1) gallé (2) foyré.

b. Leur position dans la famile.

c. Leurs occupations/professions.

d. Lieu de travail de chaque membre du gallé ou du foyré (ville, village).

III. Informations sur l'économie, les revenus et les dépenses de la famille.

a. Est-ce que ceux qui partent travailler ailleurs reviennent souvent? Combien de fois dans l'année? Pendant combien de temps?

1. Quand ils reviennent au village qu'est-ce qu'ils font comme travail? Comme affaires?

2. Est-ce qu'ils envoient régulièrement de l'argent du village?

3. Pouvez-vous nous dire combien a été envoyé la dernière fois? La fois précédente?

4. Qu'est-ce qu'on fait avec l'argent envyoé au village?

5. Qui décide de ce qu'on fait avec l'argent envoyé au village?

6. Est-ce ceux qui travaillent hors du village peuvent décider sur ses propres achats, ventes et investissements sans consulter le village? Si ou, quels achats, ventes et investissements?

b. Au village, combien de champs avez-vous au gallé? au foyré? qu'est-ce que vous vultivez?

1. Qui cultive vos champs? Est-ce que vous louez la main-d'euvre? La main-d'euvre louée vient d'où?

2. Est-ce que vous pouvez vendre vos champs? Qui décide la vente des champs?

3. Est-ce que vous avez du bétail au gallé/foyré? Combien?

4. Qui s'occupe du bétail et comment?

5. Est-ce que vous vendez votre bétail? Qui décide la vente?

6. Quelles nouvelles responsabilités la femme a-t'elle si le mari est absent?

IV. Informations su la position économique de la femme émigrée.

a. L'organisation de travail à Nouakchott.

1. Qu'est-ce que vous faites à Nouakchott? Comme travail rénumérée? Comme travail non rénuméré

2. Est-ce qu'il y a d'autres femmes qui travaillent avec vous? Régulièrement? - leur ethnie, caste ordre?

3. Est-ce que les hommes qui viennent à Nouakchott, travaillent - ils et vivent - ils ensemble? Régulièrement? - leur ethnie, caste, ordre? (est-ce que tous le hommes qui travaillent ensemble sont de la même ethnie?)

4. Est-ce qu'il y a une association de femmes à Nouakchott? Quel est le rôle de cette association? Décrit-la?

b. Indices de dépendence monetaire.

1. Avec qui est-ce vous habitez ici?

(a) Seule

(b) Proche-parents

(c) nouvelles camarades

(d) autres

2. Y a t'il un lien de dépendance entre la famille à Nouakchott et et vous? Quelle est la nature de ce lien?

3. Si le mari est absent, il vous envoie de l'argent? Des cadeaux? Des bijoux?

(a) Qu'est-ce que vous faites avec cet argent, (ou cadeuax, bijoux) envouyés?

(b) En cas de circonstances graves, est-ce que vous pouvez vendre ce qu'il t'a donné sans consultation?

4. Qu'est-ce que vous faites avec l'argent que vous gagnez?

(a) Est-ce que vous envoyez une part au village?

(b) Est-ce que vous donnez une part aux parents ou à amis (e) à Nouakchott?

(c) Pouvez-vous effectuer un achat (vente) au préalable sans consulter:

(1) Le groupe avec lequel vous travaillez?

(2) Le dyomgallé?

(3) Le mari?

c. Comparaison entre la position de la femme à Nouakchott et sa position au village.

1. Est-ce que vous avez (au village) vos propres champs parmi du gallé/foyré?

(a) Est-ce que vous les cultivez vous-même?

(b) Quelles cultures?

(c) D'où viennent lex semences?

(d) Utilisez-vous la fumure?

(e) Est-ce que vous pouvez vendre les produits de ces champs sans consulter le mari? Le dyomgallé?

(f) Est-ce que vous stockez ou conservez les aliments, si oui, lesquels et comment vous les vendez?

(g) Maintenance que vous n'y êtes plus, qui fait les décisions sur les champs?

2. Est-ce que vous avez (au village) votre propre bétail?

(a) Qui soigne le bétail?

(b) Est-ce que vous pouvez vendre le bétail sans consulter le mari? Le dyomgallé?

(c) Est-ce que vous les vendez chaque année? En cas de graves circonstances?

(d) Est-ce que vous préparez des produits laitiers lesquels? Et comment? Est-ce que vous les vendez?

(e) Maintenance que vous n'y êtes plus, qui fait les décisions sur votre bétail?

d. Est-ce qu'il y a une association de femmes au village? Quel type d'association? Décrivez-la?

Questions à poser sur les croyances et les attitudes des femmes et des hommes

I. Combien de mariages avez-vous contracté?

II. Qu'est-ce que vous attendez du mariage? Comment le décririez-vous en cinq mots (Pulaar, Wolof et Hassanya).

III. Combien d'enfants avez-vous?

IV. Est-ce que c'est la femme qui leur donne l'éducation de base ou plutôt le mari? Les proche-parents? Qui vous a éduqué?

V. Si la femme ou le mari travaillait en dehors de son foyer, aimeriez-vous l'accompagner ou rester?

VI. S'il avait un choix entre le village et la ville, que feriez-vous?

VII. En général, est-ce la vie des femmes a changé? Comment?

VIII. Est-ce que vous aimeriez que vos enfants aillent à l'école coranique? ou l'école primaire?

IX. En général, quel genre de travail font les femmes que les hommes ne font pas? Quelles sont leurs activités en commun?

X. S'il y avait un choix entre l'école, le bureau, la maison et le champ lequel choisiriez-vous aujourd'hui? Pourquoi?

XI. Quelle serait la vie idéale selon vous? Pour vous? Pour vos enfants?

Lieu _____

Ethnie _____

Age _____

Sexe _____

Caste/ordre _____

APPENDIX 2

NOUAKCHOTT INTERVIEWEE RESPONSES
15 JUNE - 15 JULY 1980
1st, 5th, 6th ARRONDISSEMENTS

TABLE A. Source of Income by Ethnic Group and Caste Ascription: Income-Earning Activities, Jobs/Woman, Income-Saving Association Membership, Husband's Employment

TABLE B. Source of Income by Ethnic Group: Women's Support to and Receipts from Husband and Extended Family, Decision over use of Income

TABLE C. Place of Origin and Expressed Desire to Remain in Nouakchott, Responses by Ethnic Group.

TABLE A. Source of Income by Ethnic Group and Caste Ascription: Income-Earning Activities, Jobs/Woman, Income-Saving Association Membership, Husband's Employment

	HARATIN	BIDAN	PEULH/ TOUCOULEUR	WOLOF	SONINKE
CASTE ASCRIPTION					
Free[1]	-	11	21[2]	9	1
Artisan[3]	-	1	2	3	-
Servile	11	-	7	-	1
INCOME-EARNING ACTIVITIES					
Commerce	2	1	7	3	-
Gardening	1	-	-	-	-
Transformation, Sewing[4]	5	3	12	3	-
Salaried Domestic[5]	2	-	13	6	-
Hair-dressing	-	-	3	-	-
Teaching	-	-	-	1	-
Office	-	-	-	-	1
None	2	8	3	1	1
DECLARED JOBS/WOMAN	1.1	0.3	1.6	1.1	-
EMPLOYMENT OF HUSBANDS					
Salaried Steady Income	3	3	14	5	2
Itinerant[6]	4	5	11	5	-
None	-	-	2	1	-
Unmarried	4	4	3	1	-
INCOME-SAVINGS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP	0	0	19	8	2

[1] Includes fisherwomen

[2] Nine free Peulh included

[3] No artisan declared a caste-related activity as a primary source of income

[4] Includes couscous, 'zrig' or 'bissap', ice cream, doughnut, restaurant, embroidery, tinting, jewelry making

[5] Includes full-time and part-time maids, laundresses, washerwomen

[6] Travelling merchant, fishermen, part-time artisans, construction workers, other temporary employment

SYNOPSIS OF TABLE A

1. Eight of the twelve Bidan women declared no income-generating activities, none of them belonged to an income-saving association, while only three of their husbands enjoy a steady income.
2. Two out of the eleven Haratin women were unemployed, and two women had more than one activity. No women were members of associations and only three had husbands with steady income.
3. In contrast, there were thirty-five income generating activities cited for thirty Peulh/Toucouleur women, and thirteen for twelve Wolof women. Over half of these women declared belonging to savings associations and slightly over half were married to men steadily employed.
4. Caste does not appear to define types of activities pursued. Rather, literacy, difficulty in locating employment and social prescriptions of acceptability were the factors which we believe are most determinant in defining the range of women's activities.
5. The sample is too small and uncontrolled to furnish information which might be generalized. Nevertheless, the pattern of higher levels of work and savings involvement on the part of river women is revealed and seems unrelated to the security of husband's income.

TABLE 8. Source of Income by Ethnic Group: Women's Support to and Receipts from Husband and Extended Family, Decision over use of Income

Categorization of Responses:

Support to Dependents: Declared transfers in money or kind from women to family members in Nouakchott, village, or to husband unable to work

Receipts: Declared transfers in money or kind from relatives or friends in Nouakchott or village

Decision over use of Income: 'Positive' indicates woman's response that she decides the use of own or family income
'Neutral' indicates both man and woman decide
'Negative' indicates woman claims no say over use of family income

	HARATIN (11)	BIDAN (12)	PEULH (9)	TOUCOULEUR (21)	WOLOF (12)	SONINKE (2)
SUPPORT TO DEPENDENTS						
Nouakchott	4	2	5	15	8	2
Village	1	2	3	13	6	1
Husband	-	-	2	-	1	-
RECEIPTS						
Nouakchott	3	6	1	1	1	1
Village	-	4	5	4	1	-
DECISION OVER USE OF INCOME						
Positive	5	4	4	13	5	1
Neutral	3	2	2	4	5	-
Negative	3	6	3	4	2	1

SYNOPSIS OF TABLE B

1. For twelve Bidan women, there were only four responses indicating women's transfers to dependents, while there were ten responses confirming receipts from friends or family.
2. For twenty-one Toucouleur women, by contrast, there were twenty-eight responses indicating transfers (some women transfer income both to Nouakchott residents and village residents) and only five declarations of receipts from family or friends. Similar proportions are revealed by Peulh and Wolof women.
3. Haratin women show less capacity to support dependents than river women and less support from others than Bidan women.
4. In referring to table of women's declared income-earning activities, it appears that while Bidan women's decision making power is unrelated to her level of income-earning activity, the Toucouleur women's may be related.

TABLE C. Place of Origin and Expressed Desire to Remain in Nouakchott (Responses by Ethnic Group)

	HARATIN	BIDAN	PEULH	TOUCOULEUR	WOLOF	SONINKE
PLACE OF ORIGIN						
Aleg	3	-	1	-	-	-
Kiffa	-	3	-	-	-	-
Atar	1	1	-	-	-	-
Aioun	1	1	-	-	-	-
Moud Jeria	2	1	-	-	-	-
M'Bout	-	3	-	-	-	1
Boghe	1	-	1	-	-	-
Dar El Barka	1	-	1	1	-	-
Senegal	1	-	1	5	6	-
Podor	-	-	3	-	1	-
Mataam	-	-	-	1	-	-
Rosso	-	-	-	2	5	-
Tekane	-	-	-	2	-	-
Kaedi	-	-	-	1	-	1
M'Bagne	-	-	-	1	-	-
North	-	-	1	-	-	-
South	-	-	-	5	-	-
Southeast	-	-	-	1	-	-
Nouakchott	-	3	-	-	-	-
No Response	1	-	1	2	-	-

DESIRE TO REMAIN IN NOUAKCHOTT

	PRO	CON	N/R
Haratin	8	1	2
Bidan	8	4	-
Peulh	6	2	1
Toucouleur	12	6	3
Wolof	7	2	3
Soninke	1	1	-
	42	16	9

APPENDIX 3

SELECTED NOUAKCHOTT DAY REPORTS

(in French, unrevised)

RESEARCHERS/INTERPRETERS

Dieo Gadiaga
'Awa N'Diaye
Mariem Tall
Fatima Vall mint Cheibani

17 JUNE - DIEO

Femme Ouolof: Environ 39 ans, restauratrice refuse de répondre sous prétexte qu'elle n'a pas à dire sa vie privée qui ne regarde qu'elle, m'a reçu indifféremment (croit qu'on vient de la police) avec maintes explications, je n'ai pu avoir aucune réponse d'elle sinon qu'elle est mariée.

Femme Diola: Environ 24 ans, ménagère, mariée me demande gentillement de partir sous prétexte qu'elle n'a pas de temps et qu'elle est en train de faire le déjeuner pour son mari et ses enfants.

Femme Ouolof Tioubalo: (pêcheur) Me demande de revenir prochainement, préfère avoir le temps de réfléchir.

Femme Ouolof Bailo: (bijoutier) Vit avec son mari et sa coépouse gaolo (griot) 1ère femme bailo: pas d'enfants 6 ans mariage 1er et seul mariage agée de 23 ans attend enfants et bonheur dans son ménage. Elle habite Boklol (Dagana Sénégal) revenue rejoindre mari Mauritanien et Bailo (possède atelier à la capitale).

Dépense mensuelle de la Famille: 2 chambres 1000 UM chacune - 260 UM dépense journalière sans le petit déjeuner.

Activité: tresse, travaux domestiques, cotisation avec femmes du coin.

Tarif des tresses: 400 UM sans laine - 500 UM avec laine - 1000 UM Rasta.

Travaux domestiques: femmes et cuisne.

Activités avec femmes du coin: 100 UM par événement - 200 UM chaque fin de mois - prendre 4000 UM caisse plus 100 UM par personne qu'on donne à la femme qui a une quel - conque fête (bapteme, mariage ou décès).

Investissement de son argent: or, habillement - le revendre en cas de besoin nécessaire.

Envoie une part aux parents: 1000 UM (dernier envoi) savon, tomate et lait.

Situation au Village (Bokol) Sénégal: Possède terres, quelques bétails (chèvres et boeufs)

Semence: au marché et gardée à chaque fin de récolte (pour semence, année suivante).

Cultive: mil et arachides.

Main-d'oeuvre: Père et mère.

Condition de paiement: partage le revenu de la récolte.

Bétail: vendu en cas de besoin sans consulter (Diomgalié).

Choix: La ville où son métier marche mieux.

Cadeau du mari: 100 UM ou 200 UM par mois qu'elle dépense en eau et savon; 10 UM par bassine d'eau.

Souhaite: maternité joie d'être mère.

Pétrole: Sans électricité 20 UM pour 4 jours.

2ème Femme Ouolof Gaolo (griot) âge - 22 ans

Situation: 2ème mariage, 1 enfant du 2eme mari - 1er mariage néant. 2 ans de mariage habite Nouakchott depuis 4 ans avec frère marié (2 femmes ouolof et mauresque) travaillant à la RECOGIM (usine de mousse).

Profession: Ménagère et éducation de son enfant, un peu de couture sans diplôme (Singer).

Dépense Journalière: 360 UM déjeûner et dîner; 60 UM petit déjeûner; 40 UM pour eau et pétrole.

Education: tante paternelle (soeur du père) dupuis 1 an décision du père, 18 ans retournée vers parents cause mariage - école occidentale 6 eme secondaire cesser propre gré.

Vie idéale: continué dan l'école occidentale - beaucoup d'argent - belle situation, amour du conjoint et 4 enfants.

Souhait pour ses enfants et leur éducation:

Souhait pour enfants: fréquente l'école française, belle situation, devenir quelqu'un.

école coranique: Pour pouvoir prier et comprendre l'arabe.

Cadeau du mari: 2000 UM chaque fin de mois.

Investissement: Habillement ou des parures (or) qu'elle revend en cas de besoin sans consulter mari de temps à autre envoie 1000 UM ou des habits aux parents (Sénégal). Me prie de partir et qu'elle ne répondra plus à aucune de mes questions.

19 JUNE - DIEO

Femme Diago: immigrée à Nouakchott depuis [illegible] ans. Originaire de la Guinée Bissao mariée à un peintre immigré lui aussi depuis 10 ans originaire de la Guinée Bissao. Cette femme n'a accordé une interview après maintes explications, m'a reçu dans sa chambre unique composée de 2 matelas à même le sol et une table comme meuble. Vie dans une maison de 8 chambres toutes louées.

Situation à Nouakchott: Elle a un mari peintre âgé de 50 ans et elle de 40 ans. Elle a eu 9 enfants dont 7 décédés. Les 2 à Guinée Bissao, les 5 autres enfants à Nouakchott. Son mari peintre voulant loué leur chambre à 1200 UM, reste de temps en temps 2 semaines à 10 jours sans travail. C'est une chambre qui comprend 3 personnes: son mari, elle et un frère du mari qui participe aux dépenses journalières soit 70 UM chaque jour et à la charge d'acheter chaque jour de l'eau à 20 ou 40 UM pour aider son frère lui même mécanicien mais sans charge n'étant pas marié. Elle reçoit toujours 100 UM pour le repas du jour. Elle utilise une lampe à pétrole, achète un fût le 10 litres à 205 UM pour 4 mois. Ses deux enfants vivant sont à la charge de sa soeur parce que c'est une tradition des N'Diago, si une femme qui a 3 enfants qui meurent successivement on doit donner la charge de ses enfants à venir avant 7 ans sinon ils seront morts eux aussi. C'est pourquoi après le décès de ses 7 enfants, elle a confié la charge de ses 2 enfants restant à sa soeur qui est restée au village (Bassiéra en Guinée Bissao).

Situation d'origine: Elle possède des champs de riz au village. Son Père étant décédé, son oncle, le frère de son père a hérité de sa mère. Leurs champs étaient cultivés par son oncle, sa mère, elle et sa soeur. Quand elle était au village pour la semaille, depuis qu'elle est née elle a toujours vu que son père gardait toujours de la semence pour l'année suivante. Et si une famille avait une mauvaise récolte, toutes les autres familles qui ont eu une bonne récolte donnaient un peu de leur récolte à la famille qui a une mauvaise récolte. Elle utilise le produit de la récolte pour la nourriture et en garde pour la semence. Le père qui est Diomgallé prend la décision pour toute la famille personne n'ose rien dire, c'est leur loi personne ne contredit le chef de famille.

Comment ils s'organisent pour les semailles: Les femmes relevaient leurs pagnes et entraient dans les rizières pour planter le riz. Les hommes les aidaient pour les semailles.

Elles partaient à la pêche pendant la saison sèche. Elles devaient obligatoirement se raser la tête pour partir avec les hommes à la pêche avec le revenu de la pêche, les hommes donnaient aux femmes le produit du jour et vendaient le reste au marché.

Pour l'huile de palmes: Elles accompagnaient les hommes dans la brousse et chantaient quand ces derniers grimpaient aux palmiers pour enlever les noix. Le femmes pilaient les grains pour en extraire l'huile. Les hommes faisaient un partage équitable de cette huile à toutes les femmes qui étaient présentes et qui chantaient.

Elle ne reçcoit aucun cadeau de son mari, elle ne doit pas se révolter de peur que ses 2 enfants deviennent des vagabonds c'est la loi des N'Diago. Elle n'envoie rien à ses enfants qui se nourrissent du produit de leurs champs puisqu'elle en a une part et aussi sa soeur n'admettrait jamais ce geste (honneur).

Elle souhaite retourner au village, elle aime le travail des champs par habitude et se sent mieux au pays qu'ici., parceque Nouakchott on ne s'entraide pas. Elle veut que ses enfants deviennent des prêtres. Elle serait vraiment content de voir ses enfants comme prêtres et parlant de Dieux et de Jésus. Et là toutes les autres femmes seront jalouses d'elle.

23 JUNE - DIEO

C'est une maison conventionnée, habitée par 2 coéouses que j'ai pu interviewer en même temps.

Origine de la 1ère femme: Elle est de Thékane (Mauritanie), elle est Thioubalo (Pêcheur)

Origine de la 2eme femme: Elle est de Fanaye (Mauritanie) c'est une Torodo (noble)

Occupation du mari au village: Il est originaire de Magama (Mauritanie, il est Torodo). Il était agriculteur pendant les vacances et élève pendant l'année scolaire. Il aidait ses parents pendant la saison des pluies. Après la fin des études est venu à Nouakchott pour raison de travail.

Situation familiale à Nouakchott: Le mari est assistant à l'Asecna. C'est une famille qui comprend: les 2 enfants de la 1ère femme plus 3 enfants de la 2eme femme et 3 autres jeunes dont l'un est chauffeur et l'autre maçon, le 3eme sans travail et aucun d'entre eux ne coopère aux dépenses journalières. Les deux femmes ont un commerce commun de grêmes glacées et font un partage équitable de la recette soit 300 UM chacune, si ça marche vraiement pas la recette baisse jusqu'à 100 UM par personne. La 1ère femme est une coiffeuse (tresses) soit 200 UM des tresses simples et 500 UM si elle rajoute de la laine.

La 2eme femme est blanchisseuse, elle se déplace pour faire le linge aux intéressés elle a 400 UM par déplacement et 60 UM pour le savon.

Toutes deux aident le marin. Elles s'y paient des habits pour elles et pour les enfants et aussi des parures. La 2eme fenvoie 500 UM à 400 à ses parents qui n'ont ni champs ni bétail et elle le fait tout le temps qu'elle voit une occasion. La 1ère femme n'envoie pratiquement rien à ses parents qui sont aisés sinon elle reçoit à chaque fête un mouton que lui donne son père pour aider son mari. Ses parents possèdent des bétails (boeufs et moutons) son père et ses 2 frères sont des pêcheurs et vont en mer, sa mère est vendeuse de poisson. Ils ont aussi des champs qui sont cultivés par la main-d'oeuvre qui devait prendre les 9/10 de la récolte et le 1/10 revient à son père. La récolte est gardée dans des greniers pour la nourriture de l'année. Son père et sa mère décident ensemble sur leurs revenus.

Situation économique: Elles occupent une maison conventionnée. Elles ont 200 UM par jour soit 5000 UM par femme à chaque fin de mois. Le mari paie 100 kg de riz pour le mois soit 155 UM, 2 sacs de charbon à 207 UM le sac soit 414 UM, elles font 2 fois le thé par jour, un verre de thé le matin et un verre de thé le soir soit 1500 UM par moi et 50 UM de thé par jour. Elles prennent mensuellement 7 pains de sucre à 700 UM. Elles utilisent 17 litres d'huile soit 1160 UM par mois. Pour le petit déjeuner il leur faut 2 miches de paid à 22 UM et 2 boites de lait à 20 UM. De temps en temps elles ont des parents qui viennent à l'improviste et il faut qu'elles sortent de leur argent pour augmenter la dépense journalière. Leur mari est dépassé par toutes ces charges mias ne peut que supporter car tous les gens qui viennent sont ses propres parents (frères et cousins).

Elles trouvent que leur situation actuelle est meilleure parce qu'ici elles ont un métier qui rapporte (crêmes glacées, tresses, blanchissage) et au village elles ne pourront jamais le faire sinon cultiver des champs et c'est dégoutant pour elles. Elles préfèrent toutes les deux faire de la couture dans un centre d'éducation féminine et elles pourront utiliser deux heures entre 4h et 6h pour pouvoir coudre leurs habits et ceux de leur mari et enfants et aussi pour en faire un petit commerce et le rajouter à leur commerce d'aujourd'hui.

Elles ont une association de femmes halpoulars dans laquelle elles sont membres cette association consiste à faire des tours de thé chaque dimanche et verse chacune 40 UM qui seront destinés à la femme qui fait son tour de thé. Elles le font pour question de se rassembler et de causer de tout et de rien pour se divertir et oublier les durs travaux de la semaine.

24 JUNE - DIEO

Origine de la femme: Elle est Torodo de Thialaka (Sénégal), elle est âgée de 18 ans 3 enfants.

Origine du mari: Il est Torodo de Bogué (Mauritanie)

Occupation du mari au village: Il était berger et cultivateur dans le champ de ses parents (mil et des patates).

Occupation de la femme au village: Elle était cultivatrice, elle semait le grain, partait à la maison pour la cuisine et laissait les hommes terminer le travail.

Utilisation de la récolte: Elle utilisait (sa famille) la récolte pour la nourriture de l'année et le gardait dans une chambre qui n'a qu'un lit de côté et les sacs de l'autre les invités y passaient la nuit ou les frères. Elle vendait 3 à 4 sacs pour les denrées alimentaires.

Composition de la famille au village: Sa famille comprend son père qui prend chaque decision, sa mère, ses deux frères encore jeunes.

Après la sécheresse quand il n'y avait plus de crue la mari qui avait des ambitions de chauffeur est venu à Nouakchott tenter sa chance.

Occupation du mari à Nouakchott: Il est chauffeur au Croissant Rouge et perçoit 6000 UM par mois.

Occupation de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle est laitière. La poudre de lait lui est donnée par le Croissant Rouge. Elle a chaque jour un bénéfice de 60 UM ou 100 UM en raison de 20 UM le pot de lait caillé.

Situation à Nouakchott: Elle a 3 personnes toutes cousines du mari qui mangent et dorment chez elle: l'un est maçon et l'autre électricien et le dernier est blanchisseur mais ne leur apportent aucune contribution. Les enfants étant jeunes partiront à l'école dès qu'ils auront l'âge. Elle le fait suivisme. Elle espère tout ce qu'espèrent les autres qui ont leur fils à l'école.

Situation économique: Elle a 2000 UM par mois soit 60 UM par jour. 1 kg de riz par jour soit 30 kgs le mois à raison de 450 UM le mois. Elle rajoute 40 UM à 60 UM chaque jour sur la dépense journalière. Pour l'eau, des fois la citerne du gouvernement apporte de l'eau et quand la citerne n'est pas là, elle achète une barril à 30 UM. Le thé est utilisé chaque jour 3 fois: le matin, l'après midi, et le soir soit 90 UM par jour. Elle utilise une lampe à pétrole soit 1 litre et demi pour 3 jours etréchaud qui prend 4 litres soit 80 UM pour 10 jours. Elle consomme 20 litres d'huile, 1200 UM dans le mois. La maison appartient à son mari.

Elle préfère Nouakchott où elle peut avoir un petit bénéfice alors qu'au village tout le monde a du lait chez soi personne ne va pas s'aventurer à en acheter. Elle a un frère qui est au Gabon, qui a envoyé 10,000 UM la dernière fois et il décide du partage de cet argent soit 400 UM à sa soeur mariée avec un vieux cultivateur 400 UM à sa grand-mère 700 pour la mère et le reste pour le père qui doit prendre des décisions: nourriture et d'autres besoins.

Elle a déjà appris le tricotage et aimerait fréquenter une école de trico ou un centre pour en gagner un peu d'argent pour ses parents et pouvoir tricoter les habits pour ses enfants. Elle a un temps libre de 3h à 5h. Elle fréquente une association de femmes toutes des Torodo, elles sont au nombre de 15 femmes dont 1 Kordo. Elles versent 200 UM à chaque fin de mois pour une caisse et à chaque fois que l'une d'elles a un baptême ou un mariage, elles donnent 200 UM à la femme Kordo (captive) qui va l'annoncer à 10 Horbé (captives) qui vont s'occuper des travaux et de la cuisine. A la fin de la fête la responsable sort 1000 UM de la caisse plus 40 UM que doit doit donner chacune des femmes du groupe pour la femme qui a un baptême ou mariage, qui sera une aide sur la paie des Horbé.

25 JUNE - DIEO

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire de N'Goral Guidali (Mauritanie) c'est une Torodo

Origine du mari: Il est originaire de N'Goral Guidali (Mauritanie) il est Torodo

Occupation du mari au village: Il était cultivateur de mil dans les champs de son père (3 champs). Il cultivait, semait les grains et aidait pour la récolte qui était gardée dans des greniers et servait de nourriture pour toute l'année.

Occupation de la femme au village: Elle était cultivatrice de mil sorgho et de mais, elle était aussi bergère de boeufs et moutons. Pour les champs son père employait de la main-d'oeuvre qu'on payait 2 grands pots de mil chaque fin de mois. Le père vendait une partie de la récolte pour la provision de l'année et en gardait pour la semence de l'année suivante. Pour le bétail, il en vendait aux marchands de moutons qui les revendaient dans la ville. Et à chaque fête réligieuse il en tuait un. Les boeufs ne sont pas vendus mais sa mère et elle chaque soir traiaient le lait pour en faire du lait caillé qu'elles vendaient, le revenu était uniquement pour la mère et la fille. Elle est fille unique.

Raison de leur arrivée à Nouakchott: Mariée à l'âge de 15 ans, elle est restée au village avec son mari cultivateur jusqu'à l'âge de 20 ans. A cause de la sécheresse le mari se trouvant sans revenue ne voulait plus être à la charge de ses beaux parents avec ses 2 enfants et sa femme, est venu tenter sa chance à Nouakchott.

Situation de la famille à Nouakchott: Sa femme a 29 maintenant et ne s'occupe que des travaux domestiques. Le mari est marchand de légumes au marché de la capitale. Elle habite son mari et ses 6 enfants dans une baraque qui leur appartiennent. Elle a comme dépense journalière 100 UM pour le déjeuner et pour le diner le mari amène chaque soir de la viande ou du poisson. Elle emploie 100 kg de riz dans le mois, 20 litres d'huile, 6 pots de Nescafé, 25 UM un barril d'eau pour 2 jours, 6 pots de Nestlé à 25 UM le pot, 20 UM de pain, 8 pains de sucre à 95 UM l'un, 2 sacs de charbon soit 440 UM, 6 savons à 30 UM l'un, 2 litres de pétrole soit 50 UM pour 15 jours. Elle consomme 3 fois le thé dans la journée soit 200 UM de thé pour les 5 jours et 2 pains de sucre soit 190 UM pour 7 jours. Elle a 7 personnes qui viennent manger chez elle à chaque heure de repas, l'un est tailleur, 1 chauffeur 3 mécaniciens et les 2 autres sont sans travail. Toutes ces personnes ne lui accordent aucune aide, toutes les charges retombent sur le mari. Il s'occupe aussi de l'habillement de sa femme et de ses 6 enfants dont 2 partent à l'école, il faut aussi acheter des livres et des cahiers. Elle préfère le village, elle trouve que les dépenses sont moindres et qu'à Nouakchott le repas coûte cher. Elle ne peut pas partir parce que son mari l'a décidé ainsi. Elle aimerait faire un peu de tricotage dans les centres pour pouvoir faire des valises de bébé et les vendre. Avec le revenu, elle pourra s'acheter des parures et aiderait son mari pour l'habillement des enfants. Elle a un peu de temps libre de 5h à 6h. Elle n'aime pas rester inerte mais n'a pas les moyens de se déplacer avec 40 Um chaque jour pour aller à la capitale dans les centres d'éducation féminine. Elle souhaite qu'il en ait un au Keubb.

Dernier envoi aux parents: Son mari lui a donné 2000 UM il y a 3 mois elle s'est payée du sucre, un boubou, du thé plus 900 UM à ses parents. Le boubou, le sucre plus 200, le thé sont pour sa mère, et les 700 UM à son père.

Activité de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle fréquente une association de femmes qui est composée de femmes de Marda (Mauritanie) de N'Goral Guidali et de Patagal (Mauritanie) elles sont au nombre de 43 femmes. Elles doivent cotiser 100 UM pour chaque femme qui accouche soit 4300 UM. Si toutefois une personne ne cotise pas elle aura une amande de 100 UM plus ses 100 UM de participation.

Le mari lui donne 4000 UM à 3000 UM à garder, elle n'ose pas en prendre même en cas grave sinon ses enfants seronts maudits. C'est un vol et toutes les femmes qui volent l'argent de leur mari auront des enfants maudits. Elle attend le retour de ce dernier pour lui demander son avis. Elle n'ose pas emprunter quoi que ce soit son mari n'aime pas une femme qui emprunte. Elle se contente de ce que lui donne son mari.

26 JUNE - DIEO

Origine de la femme: C'est une femme Mauritanienne de Sylla au Sud de la Mauritanie, c'est une Torodo. Elle est agée de 43 ans, elle a eu un seul mariage et 9 enfants dont les 2 partent à l'école occidentale, l'ainée est mariée avec un cultivateur de Sylla.

Origine du mari: Le mari est un Torodo de Lixeiba au Sud de la Mauritanie.

Occupation du mari au village: Le mari était cultivateur de mil dans les champs de ses parents. Il allait vendre le mil stocké aux greniers dan les boutiques ou a Bogué pour la nourriture de l'année, il gardait toujours 2 sacs de mil et pour la semence. Avec l'argent du mil vendu, il achetait des provisions et en gardait pour la dépense journalière. Le sac de mil est vendu à 1000 UM à Bogué et 700 UM à Sylla.

Occupation de la femme au village: Elle aidait sa mère dans les travaux ménagers et dès l'âge de 15 ans, elle a commencé à préparer le déjeûner pour les hommes qui sont aux champs et chaque midi elle l'amenait aux champs, pendant la saison de récolte elle aidait aussi son père à récolter. Le mil était gardé dans des huttes et servait de nourriture pour l'année. Après son mariage, elle est parti au domicile conjugal à Lixeiba.

Raison de la venue du mari à Nouakchott: Etant ainé de sa famille, il voyait que le mil ne rapportait plus et que les champs de mil sont changés par le riz, proposition de la SONADER. Il a préférait venir à Nouakchott puisqu'il avait toujours entendu que c'était facile de trouver du travail. Alors il est venu rejoindre son oncle marchand de colas à Nouakchott.

Situation de la Famille à Nouakchott: Le mari est journalier à la SOMAURAL (usine d'allumettes) il a à sa charge 3 personnes qui sont tous ses cousins qui ne coopérent en aucun cas, il ne peut rien dire puisque lui aussi était à la charge d'un oncle entre parents on s'entraide toujours pense -t-elle. Elle a 100 UM par jour pour le déjeûner et 60 UM pour le dîner, elle achète 25 UM pour l'eau qui dure 2 jours avec elle, 100 kg pour riz à chaque fin de mois, 15 litres d'huile pour sucre 95 UM pour 2 jours. Elle consomme 2 fois le thé par jour 62 UM le paquet de thé qui dure 5 jours. Elle achète 1 litre de pétrole à 20 UM pour 4 jours elle emploie 2 lampes à pétrole à cause de leurs deux baraques qui appartiennent au mari. L'une des 2 baraques est habitée par les frères. Elle consomme un savon à 30 UM pour 2 jours.

Activités de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle vend des légumes au marché de Keubb. Elle achète les légumes au marché de la capitale. Elle les achète par kg et les revend au détail. Le bénéfice est utilisé pour la dépense journalière, à l'achat des bijoux et à l'envoi des parents. Elle est membre d'une association de femmes Torodo, de Kordo, de Saké et Wailbé toutes de Sylla. Elles sont au nombre de 115 femmes, chaque fin de mois elles cotisent chacune 20 UM qu'elles gardent avec la plus grande qui est âgée de 50 ans et habite la capitale. Elles versent 40 UM pour chaque femme qui a un bébé et si tu ne peux en avoir, tu as droit à 500 UM de la caisse quand tu as un mariage ou un baptême de proches parents sinon si tu dois effecturer un voyage, plus les 2300 UM des 115 femmes.

Elle a envoyé le dernière fois à ses parents au village: un pagne, un boubou, du lait plus 400 UM en espèce.

Elle n'ose pas toucher à l'argent de son mari sans sa permission. Elle souhaite que ses enfants fréquentent l'école française pour assurer leur avenir et celui de leurs futurs enfants parce que dit-elle si tu ne fréquentes pas l'école française on peut te berner facilement et tu seras toujours un non considéré parmi tes camarades qui ont eu la chance de fréquenter l'école.

Elle souhaite devenir un grande commerçante de légumes pour qu'elle puisse connaitre ce que c'est la richesse et voir ses enfants roulaient sur l'argent qu'il ne leur manque de rien et pour voir ses parents bien à l'aise parce que dit-elle l'argent fait le bonheur.

30 JUNE - DIEO

Enquête au niveau du 1er arrondissement sur une femme métisse de Toucouleur et de Ouolof.

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire Podor (Mauritanie) âgée de 32 ans. Elle a déjà eu 2 mariages et 3 enfants: 2 enfants du 1er mariage et 1 enfant du second mariage.

Origine du mari: Il est Peulh originaire de Thyli Boubacar au Sud de la Mauritanie.

Occupation du mari: à Nouakchott, il est chauffeur à la Mendes et a 11,000 UM du salaire comme le dit la femme mais elle pense que c'est plus. Elle dit que les hommes se chachent trop.

Situation économique à Nouakchott: à leur charge la femme et son mari ont un couple dont la femme est la soeur du mari de la femme interviewee. Son mari est peintre. Plus les enfants qui sont 3, et la soeur de la femme, qui est âgée de 9 ans est fréquenté l'école. Elle a comme dépense journalière:

Consommation	Quantité par Mois	Prix de l'unité	Prix total
riz	100 kg	15 UM/kg	1500 UM
loyer	2 chambres	-	1000 UM
huile	19 litres	65 UM/litre	1235 UM
sucre	8 pains	95 UM/pain	760 UM
savon	8 savons	30 UM/savon	240 UM
lait	2 pots célia	270 UM/pot	540 UM
tomate	4 pots/1 kg	190 UM/pot	380 UM
thé	par paquet (mari)	-	-
pétrole	4 litres	30 UM/litre	120 UM
eau	150 bassines	5 UM/bassine	4500 UM
dépense journ.	2000 UM	60 UM/jour	2000 UM
charbon	2 sacs	220 UM/sac	440 UM

Situation économique de la famille à Nouakchott (suite): Pour le pétrole ne peut pas nous dire combien de jours durent les 4 litres, et le thé c'est son mari qui en achète parfois au bétail, parfois par boite. Elle ne sait vraiment pas combien de temps ça dure. Elle utilise 3 fois le thé par jour (matin, midi, soir). Le total de toutes les dépenses moins le thé est égal à 12,715 UM.

Activités de la femme à Nouakchott: Il y a 4 mois de cela son mari ne travaillait pas encore, elle était blanchisseuse, chaque jour de 8h à 4 h elle lingeait des habits à 50 UM le boubou. Elle en arrivait à 400 UM par jour. Dès que son mari a été embauché à la Mendes, il lui a demandé de se reposer puisqu'il est en mesure de nourrir sa famille, maintenant à chaque fin de mois le mari lui donne 2,000 um pour qu'elle se paie ce dont elle a besoin. Elle ne se paie jamais de bijoux puisque avant de rejoindre le domicile conjugal ses parents lui avaient acheté beaucoup de bijoux avec sa dote. Et ceci est valable pour toutes les toucouleurs à qui on donne une dote.

Elle n'est pas contente de sa situation actuelle, elle préfère le village où le niveau de vie n'est pas trop élève. Mais puisque le mari ne veut pas qu'elle rentre, elle aimerait être domestique pour pouvoir aider son mari dans les dépenses journalières. Elle a déjà été domestique chez une française professeur. Et depuis elle n'a pas pu trouver quelqu'un qui voudrait louer une domestique.

Activités de la femme avec des amies à Nouakchott: Elle est membre d'une association de femmes, elles sont au nombre de 7, à chaque dimanche elles versent chacune 20 UM et vont se rendre chez l'une d'elle pour faire du thé et du lait et parler de leur ménage et de la vie actuelle. Et à chaque fois que l'une d'elle a un bébé elles côtisent 100 UM chacune. Et si il y a une femme dont le mari ne travaille plus, à chaque fin de mois toutes les 6 restantes doivent donner à la fin du mois du riz, de l'huile, da savon plus 200 UM pour aider la femme qui son mari est en chômage, toutes ses copines sont dans la même situation qu'elle.

Elle nous dit qu'elle ne s'accompagne pas avec les mauresques parce qu'elle ne comprend pas le hassania.

Elle nous fait savoir qu'il y a des femmes qui côtisent chaque mois 200 UM, elles sont au nombre de 110 femmes pour se payer du savon et se le partager après.

1 JULY - DIEO

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire de Diawa au Nord de la Maouritanie. Elle est âgée de 32 ans. Elle est Torodo (noble) et a 7 enfants.

Origine du mari: Il est originaire de Luxeiba (Mauritanie) à 45 km de Kaédi.

Occupation du mari au village: Il était marchand de bétail. Il achetait du bétail à 400 UM par mouton et le revendait à 600 UM ou 700 UM pendant les fêtes réligieuses.

Occupation de la femme au village: Elle eétait cultivatrice de mais et de mil sorgho pendant la siason des pluies et bergère quand son frère revenait au village pour aider son père dans les champs. Le frère est à Nouakchott et il est marchand ambulant de tissu.

Raison de la venue de la famille à Nouakchott: Le mari est chauffeur à la E.G.B. et perçoit 7500 UM de salaire. La femme, le mari et les enfants qui sont au nombre de 7 habitent dans une baraque qui leur appartient. Le terrain leur a été donné par le Gouvernement Mauritanien. Ils ont à leur charge la soeur du mari qui est divorcée et a 2 enfants (jumelles). Le mari s'occupe de l'habillement de ses enfants et de sa femme et de temps à autre habille sa soeur ou ses enfants jumelles.

Le mari fait un travail supplémentaire quand il a un chargement à livrer dans la brousse, il ramène toujours du charbon qu'il revend dans Nouakchott où il ramène des marchandises clandestinement.

Les dépenses effectuées au courant du mois:

Consommation	Quantité mensuelle	Prix de l'unité	Prix total
Loyer	2 chambres	350 UM/chambre	700 UM
Huile	20 litres	60 UM/litre	1200 UM
Riz	100 kgs	15 UM/kg	1500 UM
Mil	50 kgs	15 UM/kg	750 UM
Sucre	12 pains	95 UM/pain	950 UM
Savon	20 savons	30 UM/savon	600 UM
Charbon	200 kgs (2 sacs)	220 UM/sac	440 UM
Dépense journ.	3000 UM	100 UM/jour	3000 UM
Lait	6 pots	55 UM/pot	330 UM
Tomate	5 pots	60 UM/pot	300 UM
Thé	6 paquets	63 UM/paquet	378 UM
Eau	90 bassines	3 UM/bassine	270 UM
Pétrole	4 litres	30 UM/litre	120 UM
Nescafé	7 pots	50 UM/pot	350 UM
			10,888 UM

Occupation de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle est la caissière d'un groupe de 20 femmes toutes des toucouleurs Torodo (noble) qui ne font que cotiser 90 UM chaque fin de mois et achètent du fils et des tissus malicanne (blans à 40 UM) le mètre parce que toutes ces 20 femmes habitent dans les coins de Nouakchott (Keubb, 5ème arrondissement, 6ème arrondissement et Ksar) et vendent des pagnes qu'elles cousent chacune chez elle et le revend à 700 UM le pagne et le revenu de ce commerce appartient uniquement à celle qui a vendu son pagne ça ne regarde pas les autres.

Elle aimerait avoir un atelier de tissage avec ses copines qui s'entendent très bien.

Ce sont ses parents qui lui envoient du mil à chaque récolte. Elle aussi envoie 1000 UM par mois si son commerce marche bien à ses parents sinon elle envoie un boubou, un pagne et du sucre au village.

La famille au village comprend: son père, sa mère et ses 3 jeunes soeurs, son frère ne vient que par hivernage.

Son mari ne lui confie même pas de l'argent puisqu'il sait qu'elle peut se débrouiller seule.

Son argent est gardé soigneusement me dit-elle, c'est son secret.

2 JULY - DIBO

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire de Thékane. Elle est niégno (Kordo). Elle est âgée de 29 ans et a 2 enfants.

Origine du mari: Il est originaire de Cambéerenne (Sénégal) et il est coordonier.

Occupation de la femme au village et raison de sa venue à Nouakchott: Elle était cultivatrice de mil à Thékane dans les champs de ses parents. Après le décès de sa mère son père décide de l'amener à Nouakchott chez la soeur da sa mère. Elle est fille unique et n'a que 2 jeunes frères qui sont éduqués par le père. Elle est venue rejoindre sa tante à Nouakchott depuis qu'elle avait 8 ans. Elle s'est mariée à l'âge de 17 ans avec son mari actuel.

Occupation du mari à Cambérenne et raison de sa venue à Nouakchott: Son père et lui avaient une petite baraque où ils réparaient et fabriquaient des chaussures avec les peaux de chèvre ou de boeuf. Sa mère est Mauritanienne et lors d'une petite querelle avec son père (mari) est venue rejoindre ses parents à Tiguent (Mauritanie) à 104 km de Nouakchott. 2 mois après son père est venue rejoindre sa femme et s'est installé. Ayant reçu une lettre de ses parents qui lui demandait de les rejoindre il a fermé boutique (baraque ou atelier pour coordonier) pour faire son arrivée à Tiguent et de là bas il est venue à Nouakchott.

Occupation du mari à Nouakchott depuis 63: Il est tacheron (carreleur) son salaire n'est pas fixe puisqu'il gère ses affaires personnelles et a embauché quelques main-d'oeuvre. Elle ne peut pas me dire combien sont payés les ouvriers mais elle sait que les trois sont des cousins au mari et mangent chaque déjeuner chez elle.

Les dépenses mensuelles de la famille sont les suivantes:

Consommation	Consommation mensuelle	Prix unitaire	Prix total
Loyer	1 chambre	600 UM/mois	600 UM
Eau	1 barril/4 jours	25 UM/barril	200 UM
Pétrole	1 litre/4 jours	30 UM/litre	240 UM
Sucre	6 pains	95 UM/pain	570 UM
Lait	30 pots	10 UM/pot	300 UM
Nescafé	3 pots	50 UM/pot	150 UM
Thé	7 paquets	63 UM/paquet	441 UM
Savon	12 savons	30 UM/savon	360 UM
Pain	30 miches	11 UM/miche	330 UM
Charbon	60 kgs	8 UM/kg	480 UM
Riz	100 kgs	15 UM/kg	1500 UM
Huile	30 litres	60 UM/litre	1800 UM
			6971 UM

Occupation de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle est commerçante de produits de beauté (crême, savon, champooing, parfum). Elle achète les produits de Dakar et les revend à Nouakchott. Elle utilise son bénéfice pour des bijoux et ses effets personnels. De temps en temps elle donne 5000 UM à son mari pour qu'il le lui garde. Il lui a promis de l'aider pour qu'elle puisse acheter un taxi si elle atteint la somme de 60,000 UM. Elle dit qu'elle fait ferme confiance à son mari qui l'a aidé à faire ce genre de commerce et qui ne controle pas ce qu'elle fait avec son revenu. Elle est membre d'une association de femmes du même age qu'elle. Elles font des valises de bébé chez une de leur copines qui habite à la SOCOGIM et qui est employée à la BAAM (Banque Arabo-Africaine en Mauritanie). Cette femme a quelques machines chez elle.

Les trousseaux de bébé sont vendus avec savon, peigne, parfum et tout pour bébé. Le revenu est partagé en 5 parts, dont une appartient à la propriétaire des machines et les 4 autres parties sont réparties entre les femmes.

3 JULY - DIEO

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire de Rosso c'est une Bailo (forgeronne), elle fabrique des canaries.

Origine du mari: Il est originaire de M'Bagne au Sud est de la Mauritanie, c'est un Thioubalo, il est toucouleur (Pêcheur).

Elle a 7 enfants, 1 seul mariage, elle a 32 ans. Elle habite dans une maison où elle est voisine de 4 femmes Thioubalo, toutes sont mariées à des cousins et frère du mari qui font équipe ensemble. Ils ont une pirogue et ils vont pêcher ensemble. Le poisson est vendu directement à la plage, pour les vendeuses de poisson du marché.

Ils mangent tous ensemble les 5 femmes et les 5 hommes. Les femmes cuisinent à tour de rôle et elles s'entendent à merveille.

Pour les hommes le revenu de leur pêche est partagé équitablement par 5. Pour le ravitaillement chaque homme donne 2000 UM à chaque fin de mois et 500 UM pour l'eau et l'électricité.

La femme interviewée a opté pour la profession de son mari et elle est devenue vendeuse de poisson au marché de la capitale et elle est même capable de tisser des fillet si c'est son tour de rester à la maison, elle le fait entre 4h et 6h pour aider les hommes s'ils sont partis pour la pêche. Toutes les 4 femmes sont devenues vendeuses de poisson et chacune a son tour de rester à la maison pour la cuisine. Elles achètent toujour le poisson à la plage même si c'est avec leurs maris elles doivent payer parce que le revenu est uniquement pour elles.

Elles vendent chacune de son côté, elles n'ont pas un revenu commum mais néanmoins s'entendent très bien.

Situation éeconomique de la famille: Les 2000 UM que verse chaque homme est uniquement pour les dépenses sans le riz, l'huile et le loyer. Chaque homme donne 3669 UM plus les 2000 UM à sa femme. Maintenant les femmes donnent chacune ses 3669 UM à la plus âgée et elles décident d'acheter les dépenses suivantes. Et le tout est partagé en 5 parties égales. Celle qui doit préparer le manger, s'occupe du petit déjeuner, du déjeuner, du diner et du thé 2 fois par jour.

Dépenses mensuelles effectuées par la famille:

Consommation	Consommation mensuelle	Prix unitaire	Prix total
Riz	125 kgs	15 UM/kg	1,975 UM
Huile	35 litres	60 UM/litre	2,100 UM
Sucre	10 paquets	40 UM/paquet	400 UM
Café	10 pots	50 UM/pot	500 UM
Mil	50 kgs	30 UM/kg	1,500 UM
Savon	6 savons	30 UM/savon	180 UM
Tomate	5 pots	60 UM/pot	300 UM
Dépense mens.	9000 UM	300 UM/jour	9,000 UM
Loyer	--	1400 UM/mois	1,400 UM
Lait	5 pots	55 UM/pot	275 UM
Thé	6 paquets	63 UM/paquet	378 UM
Charbon	200 kgs	15 UM/kg	420 UM
			18,000 UM

Education de base des enfants: Leurs enfants ne vont pas à l'école et depuis le bas âge on les prépare pour le métier de pêcheur. On leur apprend des paroles qu'il faudra prononcer avant d'entrer à la mer pour être sûr d'être protégé contre tous les mauvais esprits, on leur apprend à tisser des filets. Ils peuvent enlever les écailles des poissons au marché ou à aider leurs mamans à vendre du poisson. A 8 ans ou 9, ils font déjà 2 à 1 jour en mer avec leurs parents et peuvent aider à tirer le filet.

Elle me décrit la femme du frère du mari qu'elle respecte beaucoup, cette femme ne rate aucune prière, ne laisse jamais ses cuisses dehors, toujours en foulard de tête et ne dit jamais un mot si les enfants se bagarent et elle dit toujours oui à son mari même si ce dernier raconte ou dit des choses anormales. Elle donne toujours de l'aumône et jeûne pendant tout le mois de Ramadan.

Elles ont toutes une tontine de 1000 UM par mois. Pour le tirage, elles inscrivent leurs 5 noms sur un morceau de papier et appellent un enfant de 3 ans pour qu'il prenne une feuille et ainsi de suite ce qui veut dire qu'à la fin du mois l'une d'elles devra toucher les 5000 UM.

Le revenu de la femme interviewée est gardé pour de l'or ou des habits parce que dit-elle les hommes ne leur donnent pas de cadeau, ils se contentent de donner pour la nourriture. Le problème des hommes c'est d'avoir beaucoup de pirogues et de gagner beaucoup plus d'argent pour Dieu seul le sait.

7 JULY - DIEO

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire de la 4ème région de la Mauritanie: M'Bout elle est Galougnké.

Origine du mari: Il est originaire de Nioro au cercle de Mali.

La femme a 24 ans, elle a 1 enfant, c'est son unique mariage, elle est en état de grossesse avancée. Sa maman a quitté M'Bout pour aider sa fille qui n'a aucun parent à Nouakchott exepté son mari. Elle compte rester 3 ou 4 mois aprés l'accouchement de sa fille.

Le mari est à Nouakchott depuis 17 ans, il a appris le métier de chauffeur ici à Nouakchott même et depuis tout le temps qu'il est ici, il ne s'est jamais soucié de rentrer dans son pays natal. Il s'est marié 5 fois et les a toutes divorcées. Il s'est marié avec la fille interviewée depuis 3 ans pendant qu'il était en voyage à M'Bout.

La femme aimerait rentrer chez près de ses parents parce que dit-elle le mari a un sale caractère. Il est vrai qu'il lui donne de temps à autre un peu d'argent pour ses propres besoins mais il fait trop la cour et chaque fois il rentre de plus en plus tard et il l'a menace de la divorcer si toute fois elle quittait le domicile conjugal pour aller retrouver ses parents.

La femme supporte tout ça parce qu'elle aime trop le mari et qu'elle ne voudra pour rien au monde divorcér et rester sans ses enfants. Le mari repète toujours qu'il prendrait ses enfants en cas de divorce comme il l'a toujours fait avec ses autres épouses. Elle ne regrette pas de s'être mariée avec un type de ce genre puisqu'elle l'aime et personne ne l'a obligée à se marier avec lui seulement c'est l'idée de se sentir tromper qui l'a tracasse.

Elle a suivi ses études jusqu'en CM2 elle voudrait travailler mais le mari a catégoriquement refusé parce que lui elle sera déracinée et se sentira en mesure de pouvoir faire ce qu'elle veut ou devenir une petite ambicieuse qui est prête à tout pour l'argent.

Situation économique de la famille: La femme a à sa charge les 4 enfants du mari dont le plus jeune a 5 ans. Elle doit s'occuper de sa personne, de son enfant, de sa maman, et des 3 apprentis du mari qui travaillent avec lui. Il y a aussi un chauffeur copain du mari qui mange avec eux. Il lui donne 1300 UM chaque fin de mois pour l'aider dans les dépenses journalières.

Dépenses mensuelles effectuée par la famille:

Consommation	Consommation mensuelle	Prix unitaire	Prix total
Loyer	2 chambres	1200 UM/chambre	2400 UM
Riz	100 kgs	15 UM/kg	1500 UM
Huile	24 litres	60 UM/litre	1440 UM
Savon	15 savons	30 UM/savon	450 UM
Pétrole	10 litres	25 UM/litre	250 UM
Sucre	10 pains	40 UM/paquet	400 UM
Charbon	100 kgs	21 UM/kg	210 UM
Lait	7 boites	55 UM/boite	385 UM
Thé	10 paquets	63 UM/paquet	630 UM
Nescafé	6 pots	50 UM/pot	300 UM
Eau	15 barrils	40 UM/barril	600 UM
Pain	43 miches	11 UM/miche	473 UM
			9045 UM

Le mari a 13,000 UM comme salaire elle a pu lire sur le bulletin de salaire de son mari qui était dans une de ses poches pendant qu'elle faisait le linge pour ce dernier.

Elle est membre d'une association de femmes qui sont toutes de M'Bout et ont le même âge qu'elle. Elles ont toutes étaient à l'école et presque toutes ont cessé leurs études à cause de leurs maris. Cette association consiste à verser 200 UM pour toute femme qui veut partir à M'Bout pour qu'elle ait de quoi amener au village et pour qu'elle soit bien vue par les autres. Chaque fois qu'il y a un baptême chacune d'elle amène soit de l'eau, du riz, de l'huile ou du savon selon les moyes de la personne, rares sont les femmes qui amènent de l'argent.

Si une femme a un mari qui est en chômage on ne l'aide pour rien seulement 200 UM pour qu'elle rentre à M'Bout jusqu'à ce que son mari retrouve une situation stable. Elle souhaite que ses enfants partent à l'école pour ne pas finir comme elle, qu'ils aient un avenir meilleur, qu'ils se comportent correctement avec les adultes et qu'ils ne volent ou ne mentent jamais.

Elle respecte une femme qui s'occupe de ses parents qui s'habille bien qui a beaucoup de bijoux et qui ne se soucie pas dès quand dira-t-on.

8 JULY - DIEO

Origine de la 1ère femme: Elle est originaire de Linguère (Sénégal). Elle a 6 enfants, et a eu 2 mariages.

Elle est devenue veuve en 6 semaines de mariage avec le 1er mari. Elle n'a jamais été d'accord avec son mari mais ce dernier a néanmoins pris une 2ème femme en disant qu'il est musulman et il peut même en avoir jusqu'à 4 femmes ça ne regarde personne. La femme est obligée de se plier à cause de ses enfants.

Elle est vendeuse de "Bissab glacé," elle cache son argent dans un lieu qu' elle connaît mais fait savoir à son mari que tout l'argent qu'elle gagne va dans les dépenses journalières alors elle se paie de temps en temps une bague en Gualam (plus fort que l'or) et la 2ème femme croit qu'elle n'a rien.

Origine de la 2ème femme: Elle est originaire de St.Louis (Sénégal). Elle a 5 enfants, elle n'a eu qu'un seul mariage. Elle est domestique et perçoit 5000 UM par mois, elle me confie que rien au monde, elle ne va cesser son travail.

Elle travaille chez des Allemands, elle prend des congés de 1 mois et ne travaille pas le dimanche chaque jour elle va à 10h et revient à 2h 30, elle passe 2 fois par semaine la journée chez elle ses employeurs elle dépense tout son argent dans la dépense journalière et dans l'habillement de ses enfants qui vont tous à l'école. Elle envoie de l'argent à ses parents soit 1500 UM par mois.

Origine du mari: Il est originaire de Boghé (Mauritanie), il est guerr (noble) c'est un toucouleur. Il est chauffeur chez les Chinois à l'Ambassade de Chine. Il perçoit 14,000 UM de salaire, il donne la nourriture de la famille et l'habillement de sa famille. Il a la charge de ses 3 frères dont l'un est marié et il est mécanicien. Les autres sont sans travail.

Elle est membre d'un Bahira (association réligieuse pour un marabout quelconque) et elles sont au nombre de 50 femmes et les hommes sont à part. Toutes les femmes Tidianes qui ont pris un WIRDE (versets de coran qu'on doit réciter obligatoirement après chaque prière).

Les lois du WIRDE Tidiane son.: ne pas fumer, ne pas être membre d'une autre association Mouride - Khadira etc. Il faut toujours adhérer vers Cheick Ahmed Tidiane le fondateur du Mouridisme. Il ne faut jamais circuler avec les souillures, il faut toujours faire des abullitions et de ne pas rater aucune prière et aucun WIRDE.

Les cotisations de ce Bahira sont les suivantes:

Droit de participation	2000 UM
Chaque fin de mois	100 UM
Pour l'arrivée de leur marabout Cheick Abdou Aziz	500 UM/personne
Por des chants réligieux qu'elles font à son intention	
Départ du marabout on prend de la caisse	5000 UM/caisse
Chaque personnel donne	300 UM pour le marabout

Lors du Gammou de Tivaoune (où habite le marabout) elles louent une voiture de leur caisse et vont toutes assister aux chants réligieux.

Frais de son commerce:

Bissab	2 sachets/jour	20 UM bénéfice 100 UM/day
Sucre	40 UM	
Glace	30 UM	quand il fait chaud 80 UM ou 70 UM en temps de fraicheur 200 UM mois de ramadan

Ils occupent tous la même maison à 4800 UM dont le frère mécanicien donne 1200 UM pour la chambre qu'il occupe lui et sa femme. Le frère donne 100 UM chaque matin pour aider les femmes sur la dépense jounalière soit 3000 UM/mois.

Situation économique de la famille à Nouakchott: Elle comprend: les 11 enjants des 2 femmes, le frère marié et sa femme plus ses deux enfants sans travail.

Dépenses mensuelles effectuées par la famille:

Consommation	Consommation mensuelle	Prix de l'unité	Prix total
Loyer	4 chambres	1200 UM/chambre	4,800 UM
Riz	100 kgs	15 UM/kg	1,500 UM
Huile	30 litres	60 UM/litre	1,800 UM
Pétrole	7 litres	25 UM/litre	175 UM
Sucre	8 paquets	40 UM/paquet	320 UM
Charbon	150 kgs	8 UM/kg	1,200 UM
Lait	30 pots	10 UM/pot	300 UM
Thé	8 paquets	63 UM/paquet	504 UM
Nescafé	8 pots	50 UM/pot	400 UM
Eau	30 bassines	8 UM/bassine	240 UM
Pain	90 miches	11 UM/miche	990 UM
Tomate	30 pots	30 UM/pot	900 UM
Dépense mens.	9000 UM	300 UM/jour	9,000 UM
			22,129 UM

14 JULY - DIEO

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire de Darelle Barka, elle a 30 ans. Elle s'est mariée une seule fois; elle a 5 enfants.

Origine du mari: Il est originaire de Magama au Sud de la Mauritanie, il est âgé de 40 ans, il est infirme pour cause: un jour à Magama quand il revenait des champs vers 9 heures du soir, il a croisé un Djin me raconte sa fe-me, et ce Djin l'a complétement transformé depuis lors il ne march plus ne parle plus et a les mains complétement inertes.

Occupation de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle est domestique chez des Algériens, elle perçoit 5000 UM de salaire, elle ne travaille pas le samedi et le dimanche ce qui fait qu'elle fait le linge aux clients. Le samedi et le dimanche, elle atteint des fois 600 UM à 800 UM. Ses enfants étant jeunes, vont à l'école, le mari malade, la femme à la charge du budjet et à la charge de l'habillement de ses enfants et de son mari une fois avant chaque fête muslmane.

Situation économique de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle habite dans 2 baraques une pour son mari et une pour elle et ses enfants. La baraque lui appartient, elle a vendu toutes ses parures pour pouvoir l'acheter. Sa 1ère fille âgée de 18 ans est elle aussi domestique et perçoit 2500 UM par mois, elle donne tout l'argent à sa mère qui décide de ce qu'on fait, les 4 autres enfants vont au collège et 1 à l'école primaire. Elle souhaite que ses enfants réussissent dans leurs études et aident leur père qui ne peux rien sans aide. Elle n'aurait jamais supporté que les gens aient pitié d'elle parce qu'elle sait qu'elle est capable de soutenir sa famille. Elle vit avec ses enfants et son mari et ne prend personne en charge et elle est tranquille. Ses patrons lui donnent des fois des habits ou lui font cadeu d'un mouton tous les 4 dimanches, emmènent ses efants de temps en temps à la plage et lui offrent du poisson.

Dépenses mensuelles effectuées par la famille:

Consomation	Consommation mensuelle	Prix de l'unité	Prix total
Riz	50 kgs	15 UM/kg	750 UM
Mil	100 kgs	30 UM/kg	3,000 UM
Pétrole	3 litres	21 UM/litre	63 UM
Sucre	4 paquets	95 UM/paquet	380 UM
Lait	60 pots	10 UM/pot	600 UM
Charbon	100 kgs	7 UM/kg	700 UM
Pain	120 miches	11 UM/miche	1,320 UM
Nescafé	1 grd pot	180 UM/grd pot	180 UM
Dépense journ.	150 UM	150 UM/jour	4,500 UM
Eau	30 barils	20 UM/baril	600 UM
Thé	6 paquets	63 UM/paquet	378 UM
			12,471 UM

Elle ne frequente aucune association de femmes. Les femmes de son coin l'ont minimisée à cause de son mari, elles lui montrent toujours qu'elles ont pitié d'elle. Elles se permettent de venir jusqu'à chez elle et lui donnent des restes de leur repas ou de l'argent ou du colas à mon mari en disant que c'est de l'aumône. Ces femmes, ne lui mettent jamais au courant d'un accouchment ou d'un baptême dans le coin, elle aussi s'est retirée de toutes leurs activités, elle mange bien chez elle avec ses enfants et son mari. Elle sait que ce qu' elle donne à manger à sa famille personne ne le ne fait dans le quartier. Elle enseigne toujours à ses enfants d'être fiers de ce qu'ils sont et de respecter tous les adultes. Ses enfants sont toujours parmi les lers de leur classe et ne s'accompagnent qu'avec des Peulhs et jamais avec des Ouolofs ou des Maures Blancs, des fois avec des Maures Noires et cela aussi à l'école seulement. A la maison ses enfants ne sortent pas que sur son autorisation.

Elle respecte une femme qui ne parle pas trop, qui s'occupe de ses affaires et ne fourre jamais son nez dans l'affaire des autres.

Elle doit déménager pour Teim Souéleim mais son mari n'a pas pu se photographier. Mais la femme de mon patron lui a promis de venir un samedi le photographier à domicile.

11 JULY - DIEO

Origine de la femme: Elle est originaire de M'Boghé, elle est âgée de 99 ans, c'est une femme divorcée vivant avec ses enfants dont les deux grandes filles gèrent le budjet familial. Elle s'est mariée deux fois, le premier mari étant décédé, elle s'est remariée avec le père de ses enfants qui a épousé une autre femme à Rosso et les a abandonnés. Elle a 6 enfants dont un homme marié à Tiguint qu'elle n'a jamais vu depuis 2 ans et 2 filles mariées et secrétaires et les 3 autres vont à l'école et sont des filles.

Situation économique de la famille à Nouakchott: Elle a le bras orûlé. Un matin, en allument du feu son voile fut atteint par le feu et elle a faillit perdre le bras. Elle ne peut plus rien faire comme travaux domestiques.

Le budget familian est géré par les deux grandes filles qui travillent.

Dépenses mensuelles effectuées par la famille:

Consommation	Consommation mensuelle	Prix unitaire	Prix total
Dépense mens.		200 UM/jour	6,000 UM
Riz	50 kgs	15 UM/kg	750 UM
Huile	10 litres	65 UM/litre	650 UM
Savon	4-10 s. omos	30 UM/savon	420 UM
Sucre	6 paquets	45 UM/paquet	270 UM
Pétrole	3 litres	28 UM/litre	74 UM
Thé	7 paquets	63 UM/paquet	441 UM
Eau	15 barils	40 UM/baril	600 UM
Lait	30-60 Gl.Célia	5-10 UM	630 UM
Tomate		20 UM/jour	600 UM
Charbon	40 kgs	15 UM/kg	600 UM
			11,235 UM

Activités de la femme à Nouakchott: Elle vend devant chez elle dans une petite cantine des bonbons, du c[illegible]as et quelques paquets de cigarettes.

Elle garde le revenu pour aider ses filles de temps en temps quand elles ont des invités et qu'elles se sentent qu'elles sont fauchées, elle leur donne une petite somme pour les dépanner, ou bien elle économise pour pouvoir acheter des bijoux pour ses jeunes enfants qui vont au collège.

Elle éduque les enfants dans la loi de Dieu, dans la prière. Elle respecte une femme qui ne s'accompagne pas avec les hommes, une fille qui, de l'école va directement chez elle et qui n'a aucune relation avec les hommes.

Elle souhaite que le Gouvernement Mauritanien met à la disposition de la population deux sortes de taxis différentes, pour hommes et pour femmes. Elle veut qu'on interdise lesfilles de travailler mais elle sait que c'est impossible parce que si on avait interdit à ses filles de travailler elle serait morte de faim.

Elle préfère Nouakchott que M'Boghé; à Nouakchott elle a ses enfants qui l'entretiennent et les autres qui vont à l'école.

Elle a ses baraques, elle sait que le mariage avec les Mauritaniens est toujours un échec, elle s'attend à ce que ses enfants reviennent bientôt dans leur maison maternelle et comme cela elles auront toujours leur mère auprès d'elle.

17 JUNE - AWA

Situation familiale: Une jeune femme Beidane de la Tribue Dewali vivant seule dans sa maison, elle est bien aisée pourvu du confort dans lequel elle vit. Agée de 26 ans, elle a eu 2 enfants de son premier mariage. Actuellement mariée et son époux étant à Nouadhibou ne voulant pas le rejoindre pour se procurer de biens (mainson, fonds, etc.) de son commerce.

Provenance de la femme: Elle est d'origine de Kiffa, mais provenant d'Atar par suite de mariage où elle a laisse ses parents. Elle a été éduquée par son père. Lorsqu'une femme Africaine est divorcée par son mari et qu'ils ont des enfants l'éducation de ces derniers est donnée par le père, ils sont à sa charge et ils en déduisent souvent que l'éducation de la mère rend l'enfant impoli, déraciné. Elle préfère rester en ville puisqu'elle pourra y faire son commerce (tissu, or)

et surtout qu'il est plus avantageux de vendre en ville qu'au village, les femmes ont évolué et préfèrent acheter tout ce qui est en vogue (parures, habillement). Ne pouvant pas partir au village de peur que son mari ne la retrouve pas en ville.

Activités de la femme: Elle vend son commerce seule sans être associée aux autres femmes: l'association des femmes n'aboutit qu'à un mal entendu en quelque sorte une jalousie. Elle envoie souvent de l'argent à Atar pour ses parents. Actuellement elle n'exerce pas le commerce par manque de fonds donc c'est un travail temporaire. La moitié de sa famille fivant au 5eme arrondissement, mais les relations sont étroitres, ses deux enfants sont à Zouératt avec leur père, elle n'envoie rien à ces derniers. Elle a fait des études un peu poussées mais qui ont été arrêtées par son 1er mari. Une famille Mauresque noble n'envoie pas ses enfants à l'école, elle préfère amener un captif ou un forgeronne, pour les filles c'est pire puisqu'elles reviendront de l'école déracinées, elles auront une mentalité opposée à celle de la famile.

Désirs: Elle préfère toujours faire des études pour avoir une bonne situation. Avoir du fonds et bien améliorer son commerce.

18 JUNE - AWA

Origine de la femme: Une jeune femme Mauresque (Haratine) de la Tribu Djeydiouba aux environs de 22 ans. Elle est née à M'Boghé mais d'originaire d'Aleg. Ainée d'une famille de 6 membres dont 4 filles non mariées et 6 garçons qui sont des dockers à M'Boghé.

Son père est décédé depuis 5 ans, la mère reste seule au village avec un petit fils qui l'aid (illétré). La vieille mère au village tresse des nattes et les revend. Elle s'est mariée deux fois sans enfants.

Situation familiale à Nouakchott: La jeune femme s'est remariée étant en 3eme position mais ne vit pas avec ses co-épouses. Selon elle une femme qui ne s'est pas mariée à plusieurs reprises n'est pas aimée par les hommes.

Le mari est un chauffeur, il part souvent en voyage à Boutilimitt et y séjourne une à deux semaines. La dépense journalière s'élève à 200 UM. Elle a 5 enfants dont un qui au village avec sa grand-mère qui se charge de son éducation. Elle éduque seule ses enfants sans l'aid du père selon elle il n'est pas souvent à la maison et les jours fériés, il est fatigué et doit se reposer. Elle achète souvent une citern d'eau à 700 UM pour remplir sa cuve qui dure parfois 1 à 2 mois. Elle achète 1 litre de pétrole chaque soir à 30 UM. La famille loge dans une maison appartenant au grand frère du mari.

Désirs de la femme: Elle aime faire des études mais pas de moyens; reprendre le tricot pour y gagner de l'argent et subvenir à ses besoins personnels. Elle préfère que ses enfants apprennent l'arabe selon elle le français n'est pas utile et qu'il ne servira à rien. Elle préfère Nouakchott que M'Boghé puisque son mari est là.

Elle désire envoyer à chaque fin de mois de l'argent à ses parents qui n'ont ni champs, ni bétail au village, mais elle n'a pas les moyens.

Elle affirme d'épargner parfois le reste de la dépense (4000, 5000 UM) qu'elle envoie à ses parents. Elle souhaite rester toujours avec son mari et ne préfère pas avoir de co-épouse pour ne pas être délaissée par son mari.

23 JUNE - AWA

Origine de la femme: Femme Haratine de la Tribue Counta, âgée de 37 ans environ, provenant de Moudjéria (Counta, tribue noble).

Elle a eu un enfant du 1er mariage, et a été divorcée, 2 enfants du 2eme mariage. Le mari est de la même tribue, travaille comme manoeuvre aux travaux publics.

Elle a vécu 4 ans à Nouakchott où elle est venue rejoindre son mari qui depuis sa venu à la capitale, n'est jamais revenue au village, n'a jamais envoyé de l'argent ni des habits, n'a jamais écrit aussi.

Situation de la fammile à Nouakchott: Elle habite dans une vaste cours aux environs de la Centrale Electrique sous une tente déchiquetée sans natte, ni lit sale avec une odeur noséabonde, remplie de puces. Elle vendait le couscous du soir très apprécié par la clientèle et recevait 300 UM de chaque kilogramme de farine avec la fatigue, elle est tombée malade et souffrait des maux de reins, elle était triste, couchée sur un pagne entourée de ses enfants, elle ne pouvait pas marcher. Selon elle dupuis cinq mois, elle est couchée. Elle a un enfant de 6 mois, chétif, sous alimenté, elle affirme que ce gosse a fait 3 ans dans son ventre par suite de maladie rénale et qu'elle n'est jamais partie se consulter jusqu'au jour de son accouchement à l'hospital et qu'elle a eu beaucoup de difficultés. Le mari était en congé à Moudjéria pour saluer sa mère et de là il s'est retardé de un mois après ses congés, il y a de cela huit mois qu'il ne reçoit pas son salaire. Son épouse ne vend plus de couscous, parfois, ils restent 2 jours sans manger et s'il y a de quoi manger des parents et aussi parfois au nombre de 9 personnes partagent avec eux le repas sans être prévus. Selon elle une bonne famille doit partager son repas.

Elle aimerait avoir beaucoup d'enfants (une tente remplie dit-elle), c'est Dieu qui les a crée et il les nourrira tant qu'ils vivent. Ils grandiront et viendront à mon aide et à celle des autres parents. Elle se charge seule de l'éducation des enfants, ils n'ont paf fait l'école occidentale, ils ont appris un peu le coran mais ne savent pas différencier les lettres.

La dépense jouralière s'élevait parfois de 100 UM ou 60 UM y compris le prix d l'eau 25 UM la barrile qui dure parfois 5 à 6 jours; elle achète 5 UM de pétrole par soir au cas échéant, elle n'allume pas la lampe, selon elle l'exès de la lumière entraine une malvue des yeux aux enfants.

Ses parents sont décédés, elle n'a aucun parent proche au village, ils sont tous en ville pour pouvoir subsister à la famine, ils n'ont ni bétail, ni terre, aucune source de richesse.

Elle préfère Nouakchott que le village puisqu'on y trouve de quoi manger et on peut s'y soigner quand on est malade. Elle affirme de n'avoir jamais reçu des dons du Croissant Rouge Mauritanien ni aucune autre aide venant de l'extérieur. Elle souhaite se rétablir le plus vite que possible pour reprendre ses activités et subsister à la famine avec ses enfants.

27 JUNE - AWA

Origine de la femme: C'est une Beidane de la Tribue Deychili, âgée de 30 ans, provenant d'Atar.

Situation familiale: Elle était mariée avec un commerçant de la Tribue Dewali, avec qui elle a eu 2 enfants. Elle tomba malade et tout son côté gauche fut paralysé, ainsi elle était évacuée sur Nouakchott accompagnée de ses 2 fils,

le mari n'était pas venu, il était resté à Atar soit disant qu'il s'occupait de ses palmiers puisque c'était la période de la "Guetna."

Situation de la famille à Nouakchott: Elle a été hospitalisée durant 1 mois, seuls ses enfants s'occupaient d'elle, leur père n'est pas venu jusqu'à présent il y a de cela 5 ans. A sa sortie de l'hospital, elle s'installa à la la Kebba du 1er arrondissement sous une tente qu'on lui a donnée, avec ses enfants. Le fils ainé faisait le commerce et en recevait chaque jour: 100, 200 or parfois, 250 UM avec quoi elle dépensait pour le manger. Le cadet était un apprentit dans une menuiserie parfois il recevait 50, 100 UM qu'il remettait à sa maman. La maman n'a fait l'école ni les enfants aussi sauf le coran qu'ils n'arrivent pas à lire ni à écrire. Selon elle ses dépenses s'élèvent à:

Riz	500 g	7 UM
Huile	1 dl	15 UM
Eau	1 barril	25 UM
Blé	500 g	15 UM
Viande	500 g	30 UM
Bougie	1	5 UM

Elle n'achète pas des habits, demande dans les environs de quoi porter. Ses parents sont décédés, ils n'ont ni bétail, ni champs, aucune richesse à Atar. L'ex-mari n'envoit rien à ses enfants, elle a appris même qu'il s'est remarié. Elle marche entrainant la jambe, elle voit mal, elle affirme de ne pas pouvoir payer les ordonnances qu'on lui a prescrites au dispensaire, elle souhaite aussi avoir une aide pour pouvoir subsister. Elle affirme que les femmes sont très fatiguées en ces temps difficiles à chaque fois qu'une femme se marie et qu'elle ait des enfants de lui il s'en va et l'abandonne sans rien lue donner.

30 JUNE - ANA

Origine de la femme: C,est une femme Haratine de la Tribue Sid'Ahmed, âgée de 32 ans, provenant de Moudjéria. Elle est mariée et a 2 enfants, elle a vécu 10 ans à Nouakchott. Son époux est âgé de 35 ans et il est de la Tribue Khaylal, manoeuvre journalier.

Situation familiale à Nouakchott: Elle habite sous une tente avec ses 2 enfants et son mari, c'est elle même qui a cousu la tente depuis leur arrivée. Le mari reçoit parfois 100 à 300 UM par jour et il les donne à la femme qui doit se charger des dépenses. Parfois le mari ne donne rien et c'est l'épouse qui prend des crédits à la boutique ou demande à des proches parents pour nourrir les enfants, elle n'a pas fait l'école occidentale, elle a appris un peu de Coran selon elle pour pouvoir prier et en plus c'est une obligation pour chaque musulman. Ces enfants ne vont pas à l'école actuellement puisqu'ils n'ont pas encore l'âge, mais selon elle ils iront à l'école occidentale et Coranique. Elle souhaite avoir 5 enfants, elle donnera un à sa grande soeur qui n'a jamais eu d'efants et en plus quand, ils grandiront, ils lui viendront en aide.

Elle n'est pas associée à des femmes, n'a pas d'épargne; elle n'envoie rien au village pour ses parents qui y sont restés.

Activités de la femme: Avant son mariage, elle apprenait la couture dans un Centre d'Education Féminine, elle tricottait de la laine pour les enfants, un mois après le mariage son mari lui demande de cesser, une femme ne doit pas travailler, elle risque d'être affairée. Depuis lors elle n'a pas travaillé. Actuellement, elle veut bien travailler mais ne peut pas puisqu'elle a des enfants et qu'elle n'a pas les moyens pour prendre une domestique. Ses parents n'ont pas de bétail ni de terre aucune source de richesse. Sa mère est seule

au village avec ses 2 fils, ils se nourissent tous des dons provenant de l'extérieur, elle n'envoie rien au village. Elle aime travailler, être active pour pouvoir subvenir à ses propres besoins.

1 JULY - AWA

Origine de la femme: Elle est Haratine de la Tribue Oulad Naser, elle est âgée de 22 ans, provenant d'Aioun-El-Atrouss. Elle s'est déjà mariée 3 fois sans enfants et elle est divorcée. Actuellement, mariée à un militaire de la Tribue Oulad M'Bayarek, âgé de 34 ans environ.

Situation du mari: Le mari a du vendre des armes depuis 77 à Atar, et de là-bas il a été amené en prison à Nouakchott où il a fait 2 ans, actuellement il est transféré à la prison de Kaédi où il a fait une année.

Situation de la femme: Elle habite dans une baraque seule avec ses trois enfants, elle n'a jamais reçu le salaire de son époux, elle vit au dépend de ses soeurs qui sont des domestiques et ses frères manoeuvres qui lui remettent à la fin de chaque mois 3000 UM à 4000 UM. Elle vend du pain avec de la sauce, des mangues et des arachides. Elle ne veut pas être domestique puisqu'elle n'en perçoit que 1500 UM ou 2000 UM qu ne peuvent pas suffire à ses besoins et en plus elle n'a pas à qui confier ses enfants et ils sont encore jeunes pour rester seuls à la maison.

Parfois elle répare des tentes, fait la cuisine à des tiers personnes qui lui paient 400 UM pour les tentes, 100, 150 UM pour le repas.

Depense journalière s'élève parfois de:

Riz	1 kg	13 UM
Huile	1/2 litre	30 UM
Eau	1 fut	25 UM
Thé	50 g	15 UM
Sucre	100 g	10 UM
Charbon	1 kg	8 UM
Bougie	1	5 UM

Elle amène au marché 100 UM parfois 60 UM s'il ya beaucoup de poissons.

Elle n'a pas fait l'école ni le Coran aussi elle regrette du fait que ses parents ne l'ont pas amenée à l'école. Selon elle ses enfants iront à l'école coranique et française et même actuellement ses 2 fils qui ont l'âge sont à l'école, elle préfère éduquer ses enfants elle-même. Elle préfère rester à Nouakchott que de partir à Aioun, elle a fait 7 ans à Nouakchott, elle affirme qu'elle ne pourra plus se réadapter au mode de vie d'Aioun et surtout qu'il n'y a plus de bétail, la viande est chère, le lait on en trouve peu, les terres ne sont plus cultivées par manque d'eau.

Ses parents qui sont à Aioun n'ont plus de ressources, aucune richesse, ils se nourissent au dépend des autres et d'une somme qui leurs fils les envoient à chaque fin de mois ou deux mois. Elle n'est pas associée à des femmes puisqu' elle n'a pas de quoi cotiser à la fin de chaque mois. Elle aimerait travailler pour subvenir à ses besoins et que son mari soit relaché.

3 JULY - AWA

Origine de la femme: Femme Haratine, Tribue Djeydiouba, âgée de 35 ans, provenant d'Aleg, elle a fait 16 ans à Nouakchott, mariée par son cousin qui est âgé de 54 ans qui répare des baraques. Elle a 3 enfants.

Situation de la famille à Nouakchott: Elle habite avec son mari et ses enfants au 1er arrondissement dans une baraque de 2 pièces fabriquées par son mari. Durant l'installation du Kebbe, le mari recevait beaucoup d'argent pour la fabrication des baraques: une baraque à 500 UM et qui lui prenait 2 jours de réparation. La femme vendait du couscous chaque soir et en rapportait 300 UM parfois 400 UM. Ce que le mari gagnait, le remettait à la femme selon elle il y avait une bonne entente entre eux, une organisation.

Il y a eu un drame qui a du diminuer ses activitées et celles de son mari (ce sont les paroles des gens dit-elle). Son fils âgé de 4 ans qui jouait dans rue fut belssé par un débri de bouteille le matin, il ne voulut pas le dire à sa maman, et il passait tout son temps à jouer dans l'eau toute la journée. Le lendemain il se reveilla avec une jambe enflée qu'il ne pouvait pas soulever, il n'a pas été au dispensaire, 2 jours plus tard il fut paralysé, la maman abandonna le commerce et s'occupait de son fils.

Dépenses et économie: Elle avait économisé 14,000 UM qu'elle avait confié à un gros commerçant de la place. Elle en dépense chaque jour 100 UM: 30 UM d'huile, 20 UM de riz, 25 UM d'eu, 5 UM de pétrole, c'est elle qui payait les habits pour elle, le mari et les enfants. Elle compte toujours reprendre ses activités quand son fils sera guérri. Elle veut bien être associée à d'autres femmes et vendre le couscous puis se partager l'argent, elle aimerait être domestique bien payée pour pouvoir subvenir à ses besoins.

15 JULY - AWA

Origine de la femme: Femme mauresque blanche (Beidane), Tribue Idewali, âgée de 32 ans, originaire de Kiffa, mariée à un commerçant de la Tribue Oulad Ba Sba, âgé de 45 ans. Elle a eu un seul mariage et a eu 5 enfants du même mari.

Situation au village: Elle habitant avec sa mère et ses enfants à la Badya (chemchan), elle ne connaissait pas bien la ville de Kiffa, elle a grandi à la compagne. Sone mari était à Nouakchott et lui envoyait chaque mois du riz (100 kg), du sucre (10 pains), de l'huile (10 litres), mais n'envoyait pas de l'argent. Son père était décédé depuis qu'elle avait 10 ans, elle vivait toujour avec sa maman qui l'a donnée l'éducation de base et lui a enseigné le Coran, elle sait même écrire. Elle a deux frères qui sont à Kiffa avec leur oncle maternel pour apprendre l'école. Sa mère aime l'enseignement (Français ou Arabe) raison pour laquelle elle a envoyé ses enfants à l'école peut être qu'elle n'a pas eu la chance selon elle d'aller à l'école. Sa maman enseigne le Coran aux enfants du village, 100 UM par enfant, elle tresse des nattes qu'elle vend à 2000 UM ou 3000 UM chaque natte. Son père n'avait aucune richesse (pas de terre, ni de bête) aucune source de revenue. Elle habitait sous une tente en poils que la mère réparait souvent.

Après avoir reçu tout son argent du mois la mère se rendait à Kiffa à dos d'âne qu'elle payait 80 UM aller-retour pour acheter des denrées alimentaires et des habits: 3 boubous et 2 robes pour les enfants, 2 voiles pour elle et sa fille. Elle cuisinait leurs aliments avec du bois qu'elle cherchait dans la brousse, puisait de l'eau au puits. Selon elle la vie est excessivement dure bier avant la secheresse en 75 son mari est venu la prendre avec ses enfants pour la ramener à Nouakchott puisqu'il n'y avait que le famine tous le habitants ont quitté sa maman est même venue avec elle.

Situation à Nouakchott: Lorsqu'elle est venue à Nouakchott son mari n'avait pas de maison, elle est partie s'installer à la Kebba du 6e arrondissement avec sa mère et ses enfants sous une tente qu'elle avait amenée. Elle affirme que le mari quittait à 7 heures pour ne revenir qu'à 18 heures et ne rapportait rien,

parfois de la viande et du riz. Le mari est un commerçant de voiles qu'il achetait et les revendait avec un bénéfice de 40 UM sur les 500 ou 600 UM du prix d'achat. Parfois il reste toute la journée sans manger. La mère ne travaillait plus, elle était devenue faible avec la famine, ne voyait plus rien. Les enfants n'allaient pas à l'école puisqu'ils n'avaient pas de dossiers, selon elle, les enfants des Badiya ne sont pas nés à la maternité. Ils apprenaient uniquement le Coran que leur grand-mère leur enseignait. Selon elle, elle restait toute une journée sans avoir de quoi payer de l'eau, elle allait en chercher avec le voisinage. Parfois le mari lui donne 100 ou 200 UM et elle en payait:

1 kg de riz à 15 UM
1 kg de charbon à 8 UM
1 seau d'eau à 5 UM
1 boite de lait à 10 UM

et en préparait du riz au lait, et le soit elle faisait du couscous préparé avec 500 g de viande avec 1 kg de farine de blé. Selon elle, ne peut pas être domestique puisqu'elle ne sait pas faire le ménage elle n'a aucun métier dont elle pourra faire et gagner sa vie.

24 JUNE - MARIEM

lieu: 1er Arrondissement (Keube)
âge: 35 ans - sexe: féminin - Ethnie: Pulaar
Caste: Kordo (captive) dépendant de son maitre.

Situation actuelle: Elle vit avec son mari, ses 5 enfants et sa co-épouse qui est âgée de 17 ans et qui n'a pas d'enfant, au keube, quartier situé au fond du 1er arrondissement et ne comprenant que des baraques misérables, la construction étant libre pour permettre aux moins aisés de pouvoir s'abriter. Elle partage son unique baraque servant en même temps de cuisine et chambre à coucher avec toute la famille et se content d'1 seul repas le jour à midi et d'1 morceau de pain pour les enfants le soir et bien-entendu sa co-épouse qu'elle considére comme sa fille aînée et qui dit-elle est trop jeune pour supporter cette situation, c'est-à-dire la faim. Pour elle et son mari l'essentiel est que la famille, les enfants aient quelque chose dans le ventre avant de se coucher.

Situation d'origine: Elle est originaire de Marda, village situé dans le département de N'Dioum Edy (Sénégal) d'où elle a quitté maintenant 10 ans pour suivre son mari qui est de ce même village. Ses parents y vivent et cultivent leurs champs de mil et de melons. Ils prennent les semences dans leur coopérative au village qu'ils remboursent après la vent de la moitié de leur récolte, l'autre moitié servant de nourriture, elle reçoit après chaque récolte un sac de mil et des melons sa part. Cependant elle ne contribue pas à l'entretien des champs ni aux dépenses familiales du village. Se jugeant plus pauvre même que ceux restés au village qui lui viennent souvent en aide de toute nature. Elle regrette d'être venue en ville où elle s'attendait à des monts et des merveilles, elle trouve les gens de la ville inhumains, car ils ne s'entreaident pas. Elle ne voudrait pas que ses enfants y grandissent, ce quifait ses trois enfants sont sous la garde de sa mère qui se charge de les éduquer positivement pour qu'ils ne deviennent des déracinés et ignorent le sens de l'humanité comme la plupart des gens de la ville, ses enfants n'iront jamais à l'école parce que dit-elle tous ceux qui ont été à l'école ne respectent plus les parents et disposent de leur vie comme bon leur semble sans tenir informer les parents.

Situation du mari: Son mari est tailleur et travaille sur commande la broderie des bousbous masculins, cependant sa clientèle est réduite. Cette broderie étant démodée pour certains, ce qui fait qu'il reste des mois sinon année sans travail. La femme pour secourir la famille vend du lait caillé et des beignets qu'elle n'arrive pas à écouler pendant 2 jours, la concurrence étant très intense dans leur quartier.

Elle fait le linge pour certains qui la payent 15 UM un habit. Elle se contente d'1 boubou toute l'année ainsi que son mari et ses enfants. Elle n'a le droit de contredire son mari par crainte de faire des enfants ratés, son mari doit prendre toutes les décisions sans même la consulter. La vie idéale pour elle serait de pouvoir retourner au village et cultiver leur champ, car c'est ce que demande leur éducation, mais son mari n'est pas du même avis, il compte reste en ville jusqu'au jour où il pourra rejoindre le village la tête haute c'est-à-dire avec un peu de richesse. Elle souhait avoir des enfants de grands marabouts qui feront l'honneur de toute la famille.

10 JULY - MARIEM

Lieu: 6ème Arrondissement - Caste (Foulbé)
Ethnie: Peulh - âge: 39 ans

Situation d'origine/actuelle: Elle est originaire d'Aleg, chef lieu de la région de Boghé en Mauritanie où elle vit jusqu'à présent avec ses enfants et sa mère, son père est décédé depuis longtemps. Ses parents possédaient un troupeau de bêtes perdu durant la sécheresse. Son mari aussi était éleveur très réputé tant au village qu'en ville. Ce qui fait qu'elle vivait à l'aise avec ses enfants.

Mais ces dernières années avec la sécheresse, ils sont dans une pauvreté extrême, son mari est atteint d'une maladie incurrable qui l'empêche de travailler et qui l'a finalement réduit en mandiant pour pouvoir subsister. La femme elle, est actuellement malade, elle a subit plusieurs avortements et n'a pu se soigner à l'hôpital par manque de moyens.

Cependent elle tresse et gagne 100 UM par tête ce travail n'étant pas quotidien ne lui rapporte pas grand'chose. Elle a 7 enfants de son seul et 1er mariage, ses 2 enfants vont à l'école française, les autres à l'école coranique à Aleg, où elle passe la moitié de l'année pour surveiller les études des enfants. Durant les vacances elle vient en ville avec ses enfants pour assister son mari. Ils occupent une baraque au 6 ème arrondissement qu'ils louent à 500 UM le mois; sa grande soeur qui vit à Diagily au Sénégal lui envoie chaque mois 4000 frs (700 UM). Il a un grand frère qui n'est pas saint d'esprit et elle doit s'occuper de lui, sa maman étant très âgée pour le supporter, elle aurait voulu être à Nouakchott où il ya plus d'avantage pour son métier de tresseuse, les femmes au village sont trop prises pour s'occuper de tresses, mais il se trouve que ses enfants ne peuvent pas trouver de classes à Nouakchott.

Situation économique: Elle ne dépend pour se nourrir que de son mari qui ne fait rien en dehors de la mendicité. Depuis qu'ils sont à Nouakchott ils ne mangent que la bouillie de riz. Son mari lui laisse chaque matin 40 UM ou 60 UM c'est à elle de se débrouiller.

Cependant elle arrive à ses fins avec l'aide des parents ou amis de la ville qui n'ignorent rien de leur situation actuelle. Elle ne connaît pas exactement le montant de leurs dépenses très réduit. Chez eux les femmes doivent respecter en priorité les hommes ensuite leurs parents. Le comportement est enseigné aux enfants à partir à travers le coran où ils doivent avoir une solide connaissance de base. Le respect envers les grandes personnes et l'obéissance pour les parents.

Pour elle, la femme la plus respectée c'est la femme posée et qui écoute son mari, qui n'est pas envieuse.

Projets d'avenir: Elle voudrait que leurs enfants réussissent tous à l'école coranique et française pour les secourir parce qu'elle sait que pour elle et son mari il leur sera difficile sinon impossible de refaire leur vie, qu'elle puisse s'installer un jour enfin à Nouakchott.

8 JULY - MARIEM

Lieu: 6ème arrondissement

Caste (Torodo) Kordo qui s'est libéré en se rachetant. La femme intéressée est originaire de Dar-El-Barke en Mauritanie où vit sa mère et ses trois frères qui sont des cultivateurs. Elle a eu 3 mariages et un seul enfant du dernier ménage éduqué par son père. Chez eux la tradition exige que l'aimée soit gardé par les parents pour que Dieu te donne encore d'avantage. Leur champ de mil est cultivé par ses frères qui pendant la saison sèche se disposent en ville afin de pouvoir trouver une occupation qui leur permette de gagner quelque chose. Généralement ils se font boy ou jardinier à la question de savoir son caste, elle répond: Je suis Torodo parce que j'ai payé cher pour ma liberation, je n'ai jamais été vendue, mais c'est un héritage de notre grand'mère seulement on nous appelle toujours kordo (captive) car c'est une histoire qui date.

Elle a grandi à Dakar, Sénégal chez son cousin un chauffeur des PTT qui l'a éduquée jusqu'à l'âge de 16 ans et l'a donnée en mariage à son ami, elle rejoignit ce dernier, elle fut enceinte mais elle fuit le domicile conjugal avant d'accoucher, son mari la rouait tout le temps de coups. Elle fût divorcer quelques temps aprés. Comme elle ne travaillait pas en ville, elle part au village auprès de sa mère qui l'appris à tresser. Elle eu un autre mari au village qui ne dura pas, elle prit enfin la décision de venir à Nouakchott pour travailler comme domestique, elle habite avec sa cousine mariée à un vendeur d'eau à dos d'âne mais elle paye sa baraque de ses propres frais 500 UM par mois, elle gagne 3000 UM par mois en plus des tresses qu'elle fait pour les femmes 200 UM par tête. Elle contribue d'une part aux dépenses de cette famille et envoie chaque mois des vivres à sa famille au village, elle cesse d'envoyer dés qu'elle s'apprête à aller au village, de ce fait, elle rassemble tout et l'amène avec elle.

Situation éconcomique:

Matières	Nbre d'unité	Unité	Prix Unitaire	Fréquence
Nourrit				
Riz	1 kg 500	kg	15 UM	1 jour
Huile	1/2 kg	litre	36 UM	1 jour
Mil	1	moude	30 UM	1 jour
Thé	1/2	verre	15 UM	1 jour
Lait	1	pot	10 UM	1 jour
Pain	1	miche	11 UM	1 jour
Energie				
Eau				
Charbon	1	kg	8 UM	1 jour
Pétrole	1/4	litre	7 UM	2 jours
oyer	1	chambre	500 UM	1 mois
Habille-ment	1	boubou	800 UM	1 an

Projets d'avenir: Elle souhaite trouver enfin un mari qui la comprenne le mieux possible. Avoir des enfants et leur donner une bonne éducation surtout les amener à l'école coranique et française pour qu'ils soient de vrais musulmans et aient de l'avenir. Elle souhaite être sain pour mieux travailler et payer sa mère pour ce qu'elle a fait pour elle, c'est la personne qu'elle respecte le plus au monde puisque c'est elle qui l'a mise au monde.

2 JULY - MARIEM

Lieu: 1er arrondissement (Keubé)
Ethnie: Pulaar - Caste: Thioubalo (pêcher de profession) - âge: 34 ans

Situation à Nouakchott: La femme vit à Nouakchott depuis 7 ans avec son mari et ses 6 enfants, au quartier populaire du 1er arrondissement Keubé où elle s'est installée depuis son 2ème mariage donc elle a contracté 2 mariages. Elle a été divorcé par son premier mari n'ayant jamais aimé ce dernier à qui elle a donné un enfant qui est actuellement sous sa garde.

Situation d'origine: Elle est originaire de Tékane village situé à 65 km de Rosso 6ème région de la Mauritanie où vit sa mère, son père étant décédé depuis longtemps donc elle a été par celle-ci ainsi ses jeunes frères qui sont au village et s'occupent de leur champ pour entretenir leur mère et pouvoir fonder un foyer plus tard. Etant l'aînée de sa famille, le seul souci de sa mère était la marier le plus vite possible, ainsi à la première occasion, sa mère donna sa main à son cousin, malgrés elle, jugeant ce dernier trop âgé pour elle. Elle ne manifesta cependant pas son mécontenetement de peur de faire cela à sa mère; son conjoint dit-elle était trés compréhensif et dès qu'il l'appris après des années de mariages dont elle ne se rappelle plus le nombre, il la divorça en emportant son enfant, leur enfant de 5 ans la trouvant sans moyens pour s'en occuper. Au village ses frères cultivent leurs champs (riz, mil).

Ils prennent leur semences dans des coopératives qu'ils remboursent après la récolte, le reste devant servir de nourriture. Elle reçoit chaque année sa part de la récolte 1/2 sac de riz et mil quant à son mari il est originaire du Guidimakha et est Sarakholé d'ethnie, il a quitté trés jeune son village après la mort de ses parents pour aller à l'aventure n'ayant ou aucun parent pour le soutenir. C'est ainsi qu'il est arrivé à Nouakchott et après avoir franchi différents obstacles est devenu garde républicain et gagne honorablement sa vie; ce qui lui permet d'entretenir sa femme et ses enfants. Cette dernière pour aider son mari à joindre les deux bouts vend des beignets, qui ne rapportent pas grand' chose, mais aide quand même. Elle s'arrange de son mieux pour envoyer à sa maman, la fois elle a envoyé 1000 UM, 2 savons, 3 pots de lait célia, un boubou un foulard et un pagne.

Dépenses:

Matières	Nbre d'unité	Unité	Prix Unitaire	Fréquence
Nourriture:				
Riz	4	kg	15 UM	1 jour
Mil	2	moude	30 UM	1 jour
Sucre	1	paquet	20 UM	2 jours
Thé	1/2	verre	15 UM	1 jour
Lait	1	pot	45 UM	3 jours
Pain	2	miche	11 UM	1 jour
Energie:				
Eau	1	barril	25 UM	1 jour
Charbon	1	sac	250 UM	1 mois
Pétrole	1/2	litre	14 UM	2 jours
Loyer	2	chambre	800 UM	1 mois

La femme est responsable de ses dépenses, habillement, 1 boubou par personne 100 UM/m par an, bijoux néant. Leurs deux enfants sont à l'école française, les autres fréquentent l'école coranique en attendant d'avoir l'âge de pouvoir entre à l'école française, qu'ils jugent meilleure et avantageuse pour leur avenir.

Elle souhaite avoir le plus grand nombre d'enfants possible et les éduquer tous de mainère positive. Elle voudrait que son mari accède une grande supérieure afin qu'elle soit à l'aise comme toutes les femmes des grands patrons militaires t-elle serait pour elle la vie idéale.

25 JUNE - MARIEM

Lieu: 1er arrondissement (Keubé)
Ethnie: Wolof - âge: 22 ans pour la femme 32 ans pour son mari
Caste: guers (nobles)

Situation actuelle: Elle vit avec son mari et son enfant de 2 ans depuis 4 ans à Nouakchott et n'a eu qu'un seul mariage jusqu'à présent.

Leur habitation est composée d'un modeste baraque qui leur sert de chambre et qu'ils ont installé au coeur du 1er arrondissement (Keubé) terrain aménagé pour les moins pourvus de Nouakchott. Elle a été éduquée par sa tante maternelle à Dakar d'où elle a faitsa scolarité jusqu'au CM[II] et dû cesser pour se marier et rejoindre son domicile conjugal, elle y consentit avec joie trouvant la place de la femme au foyer entourée de son mari et de ses enfants.

Situation d'origine: Elle est originaire de M'Bagam, village situé aux environs de la région de Rosso (Trarza) où vivent sa mère et soeurs qui s'adonnent à la culture du henné qu'elle se charge de transformer en poudre pour la vendre. Son père étant décédé depuis qu'elle était jeune, sa mère vit seule avec ses jeunes soeurs qui s'occupent de leur maison pendant qu'elle est au marché à vendre ses légumes produit de son jardin, sa mère élève quelques moutons le reste de leur troupeau mort durant la sécheresse; une partie qu'elle vend à l'approche de la (tabaski) grande fête musulmane pour se payer des habits ainsi que toute la famille.

Son mari est menuisier et travaille comme journalier n'ayant jamais été embauché depuis qu'il est à Nouakchott; pour pouvoir survivre, elle vend des beignets devant les écoles pour permettre de manger à leur faim. Son mari n'envoie rien à ses parents et ne prend même pas de leurs nouvelles de peur d'avoir honte au su de leur situation qu'il sait très délicate ainsi il préfère créer une barière entre eux jusqu'au jour où Dieu voudra bien changer leur situation.

Elle compte envoyer tous ses enfants à l'école pour qu'ils aient de l'avenir et ne deviennent demain des hommes sans situation comme leurs parents. Leur dépense se limite à 100 UM ou 150 UM seulement par jour y compris l'eau qu'ils achètent et le pétrole. La femme voudrait avoir le plus grand nombre d'enfants possible pour donner la garde à des parents et amies qui n'ont pas eu la chance d'en avoir. Quand à nourrir ses enfants, ils appartient à Dieu de la s'en charger lui qui les a fait venir au monde.

Elle se contente d'un habit pour toute l'année ayant pris conscience de ses moyens très limités. N'étant pas envieuse comme certaines femmes, ce qui aurait pu la pousser à faire l'adultère qui peut porter atteinte à sa dignité de femme mariée, son mari prend toutes le décisions concernant la famille, elle n'a pas à faire des objections, l'homme étant le maître de maison. La vie idéale pour elle serait d'avoir un poste à l'hôpital pour pouvoir soigner ses parents et

amis et avoir un peu d'argent pour subvenir à ses besoins, pour ses enfants une bonne éducation et une situation pour secourir lorsqu'elle sera vieille et pour son mari avec emploie fixe qui lui permette de bien gagner sa vie.

9 JULY - FATIMA

6ème arrondissement
Femme mauresque - origine: Egel Sidi Mahmoud (Kiffa)
origine de l'homme: Messouma/Tamchakette

Situation de famille à Nouakchott: Ce jour 9 7 80 j'ai effectué une visite de travail à la famille susnommée et j'ai recueilli les nouvelles suivants sur leur mode de vie et leurs opinions.

Cette famille qui se compose de 6 membres dont garçons et filles vie misérablement. Leur mère ne travaille pas et ne fait qu'aller demander auprès de ses parents et connaissances des sommes d'argents, du thé, des habits, qu'elle vend pour obtenir sa dépense quotidienne. Le père des ses enfants est un courtier mais sans capital. Il ne fait qu'acheter à crédit des moutons et les vend pour obtenir sa dépense avec un bénéfice de 300 UM à 500 UM sleon les occasions, il passe parfois deux à trois jours sans rien réaliser.

Dépense:

Matière	Quantité	Prix Unité	Frequence
Riz	30 kg	15 UM	30 jours
Huile	7 litres	60 UM	30 jours
Lait	6 boites	55 UM	30 jours
Sucre	5 pains	95 UM	1 mois
Charbon	1 sac	210 UM	1 mois
Pétrole	3 litres	25 UM	30 jours

viande, poisson, parfois, la viande parfoi, le riz au lait.
Habillement 1 voile 500 UM/voile par mois - loyer, autres (bijou, cadeau)

Cette famille qui n'a pas de dépense fixe ne dépense pas 160 UM par jour et parfois elle fait du riz au lait et elle contente de ce repas. Tous les enfants de cette famille apprennent à l'école primaire à part les petits qui n'ont pas l'âge d'inscription. Cette femme a déclaré qu'elle préfère cette vie à la vie nommade, selon elle, bénéficie due repas et d'une vie équilibré, car lorsqu'elle était nommade elle ne mangeait la viande qu'une seule fois tous les deux ou trois mois ou une occasion inattendue.

Elle passe régulièrement les journées sans manger mais boit du lait de vaches le soir. Maintenant elle est devenue habituer au repas de midi et même s'il faut pain ou du riz au lait. Elle se contente aussi des soins trouvés et la des maladies, car pour une simple fièvre, elle ne pouvait que patienter jusqu'à se qu'elle parte toute seule. Elle a déjà bénéficié des vivres 1 sac de blé à 600 UM et du lait. Je voie enfin de compte que cette femme qui à cette grande famille est si brave de telle sorte qu'elle a amené ses enfants en ville pour les éduquer et les aider dans leur avenir.

14 JULY - FATIMA

Femme mauresque, 6ème arrondissement
Femme haratine - Tribue: Deydiouba - âge: 21 ans
2 enfants du 1er mariage, actuellement mariée et sans enfant.
Epoux toucouleur, tribue: Torodo - âge: 30 ans environ. Travaille à la Banque Centrale de Mauritanie (BCM). Elle a fait 6 mois avec son 2ème mari. Elle a fait 10 ans à Nouakchott, arrivait avec sa mère qui était divorcé par son mari lorsque la fille avait 6 mois, selon t-elle, elle ne connaît pas bien son père.

Situation: Après les 2 mariages, elle est revenue vivre avec sa maman où elle s'est remariée une 3ème fois, elle reste toujours avec sa maman dans une chambre qu'elle a loué à 2000 UM mais ne le partage pas avec son mari. Selon t-elle, elle m'affirme que le mari a refusé de louer une chambre pour elle, soit disant qu'il a beaucoup de proclèmes et qu'il ne peut pas supporter une famille actuellement et ce cernier reçoit 15,000 UM par mois, ayant comme profession comptable.

Parfois sa maman la renvoie de sa chambre en lui disant de rejoindre son mari, et celui-ci ne veut rien faire pour elle et c'est la bagare entre eux. Elle dit aussi qu'elle s'est mariée malgré elle, etant jeune fe..e elle ne veut pas rester sans mari. Elle ne pourra pas aider sa mère qui n'a pas de fils ni autre fille, elle est unique.

Situation au village: Ses grands parents sont décédés et ils n'ont laissé aucune source de revenu au village. Il n'avait pas de bétail, ni de terrain. Sa grand mère était une domestique et son grand père vendait la viande au marché. Il achète des bêtes avec les bergers et les égorgeait chaque matin pour les revendre et avoir de quoi nourrir ses enfants.

Activités de la fille: Elle a fait des études occidentales peu poussés, mais elle a son diplôme en dactylographe, mais n'arrive pas a trouvé du travail. Selon t-elle son mari est très jaloux il ne l'a laissé même pas sortir de la maison à plus forte raison d'aller travailler. Il la menace toujours et l'injure dans n'importe quel lieu où ils se trouvent. Le mari la donne chaque matin 100 UM pour sa dépense, mais elle ne fait pas la cuisine, elle les remet à sa maman. La dépense journalière de la maman est de: 100 UM/jour pour le repas de midi, et 60 UM le soir pour la viande, elle n'achète pas de l'eau ayant un robinet dans la maison.

Dépense:

Matière	Quantité	Prix Unité	Frequence
Riz	1.5 kg	15 UM	1 jour
Huile	2 dl	60 UM	1 jour
Charbon	2 kg	8 UM	1 jour
Thé	1/2 verre	15 UM	1 jour
Sucre	100 g	20 UM	1 jour

Situation des enfants: Les 2 enfants sont éduqués par leur grand-mère et ne font pas l'école ni le coran.

Selon t-elle elle ne veut pas les avoir en charge, sinon elle sera trop prise et ne pourra vaguer à ses occupations et surtout qu'elle ne veut pas les éduquer (n'a pas le temps) et que le mari ne sera pas content de cette charge.

APPENDIX 4

BRIEFS OF CPF/PMI

Shelly Fields

Protection Maternelle et Infantile (PMI) (Maternal and Infant Care)

Purpose: The service of the Protection Maternelle et Infantile was created by the Ministre of Health in 1973 for the purpose of addressing the needs of mother and child, and specifically:

(1) Health care of mothers during pregnancy and breast-feeding, and instruction in elementary childcare and priciples of home economics.

(2) Childcare with the purpose of assuring the child a growth and harmonious development on three planes: physical, mental and social.

(3) Accessory training of auxiliaries and matronnes who, following internship at the centers, will be capable of replacing nurses and midwives in their activities.

Donor Assistance: International donor groups include the Red Cross, CARE, UNICEF, the World Food Program and the Catholic Relief Services. The World Food Program and Catholic Relief Services have established a regular pattern of food staples distribution and storage facilities to the PMI and CREN (Centres de Recuperation Educative et Nutritionelle). The U.S. Peace Corps contributes personnel to the programs, including laboratory technicians, nurses, and social workers to selected sites in the interior. The OMS and the Centre International des Enfants provide some material support to the PMIs. USAID has supplied a limited number of medicines and equipment to the centers.

PMI Activities: ccording to the Ministry's plan, each PMI provides a list specific activities such as pre- and post-natal consultation, recuperation centers for malnourished children (CREN), and gynecological consultations. Over the past two years, the PMI has expanded its immunization program to reach the rural population and the Catholic Relief Service has extended its distribution program, interspersed with demonstration techniques, to most PMI locations. Education and nutrition programs (CREN) have begun at several PMI sites. The eventual objective of the PMI program is to provide activities specific to mothers and children at all GIRM dispensaries.

Shortcomings: The success of the PMI is measured by the number of clients, the breadth of individual services it provides, the degree of program integration of preventative measures, and the soundness and comprehensiveness of primary maternal and childcare extension. On the basis of these criteria, several operational shortcomings may be observed. The greatest complaint voiced by the women interviewed in Nouakchott and the interior concerns the general lack of medicines and equipment necessary to carry out activities. Secondly, there appears to be a persistent difficulty in establishing trust between clients and health workers. The result of mistrust is that many families continue to seek out the services of marabouts over the services of the PMI and other governmental facilities. Some clients insist on utilizing the two simultaneously, hypothesizing that the quantity of cures increases the likelihood of cure. Unfortunately, oftimes the two systems are divergent and used together, techniques and medicines may counteract each other.

Although their calendars of activities are identical at the outset, each PMI has identifying characteristics relating to location, size of surrounding population and population composition, town income levels, and the duration of PMI operations. The priority factor in determining PMI operating success appears to be the quality and the commitment of its personnel, which varies considerably among the PMIs. In extreme cases, personnel were observed as lethargic and disinterested in the program; in moderate cases, work schedules and hours were abused; and in only one of the five sites visited were the personnel described as courteous, helpful and astute. One of the causes for these difficulties may be attributed to the fact that while most of the training occurs in the capital city, bush posts are often considered undesirable to trainees and these posts are poorly monitored.

Centres de Promotion Feminine (CPF)

Purpose: The Direction of Social Affairs directs the CPFs under the following guidelines:

(1) The creation of appropriate structures for the protection of children.

(2) The social promotion of women and the reduction in number and the training of the physically and mentally handicapped.

(3) The study and elaboration of legislation, statistics and social matters.

Under these general Direction precepts, the Service of Socio-educative Promotion is responsible for questions relative to women's promotion and the integration of women in economic development by means of the women's education centers.

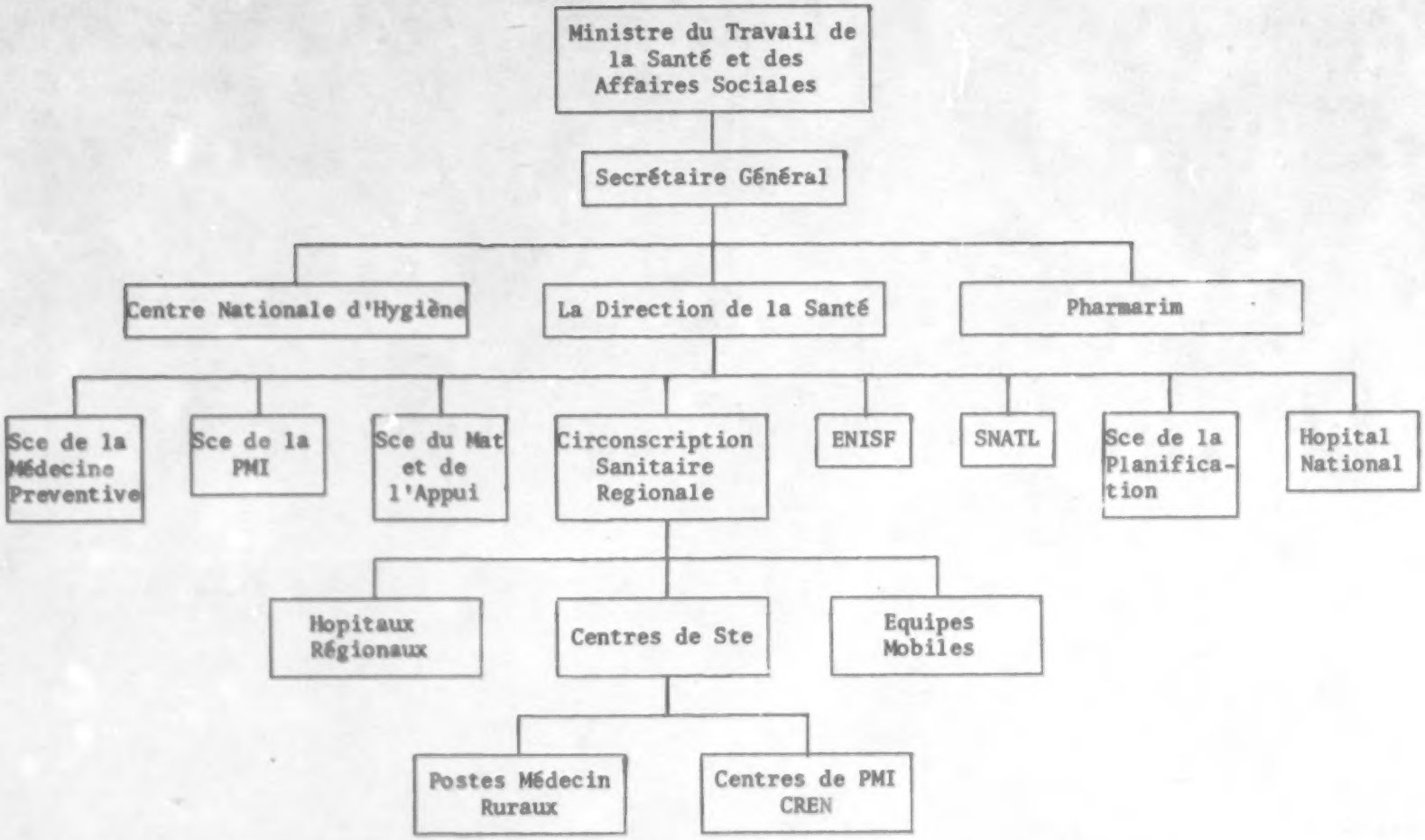
Donor Assistance: The Centers have been given some assistance in the form of single package agreements or one-time donor contributions of materials. One of the CPF's major struggles, in fact, has been the procurement of materials from donors since the government services have proved unable to furnish materials reliably.

Activities: In principle, there are thirteen CPFs operating in the larger towns throughout Mauritania. Salaried personnel are women who have completed a formation enduring three years. These civil service employees instruct interested women in trades such as tinting (Kaedi), mat weaving (Kiffa), rug weaving and sewing, knitting and handicraft skills.

Shortcomings: The major problem in the Centers was cited as the lack of material support by the government services. Staffing the remote locations is also a foremost obstacle to extending services. Further, the Centers have no marketing organization to sell their products. Overall, they lack a central planning scheme organized to supervised personnel, regulate services, coordinate activities, promote marketing of goods, or extend programs into more isolated rural areas.

Source of Information: Discussions with Ministry personnel, field observation in Aleg, Boghe, Rosso, Kiffa and Nouakchott.

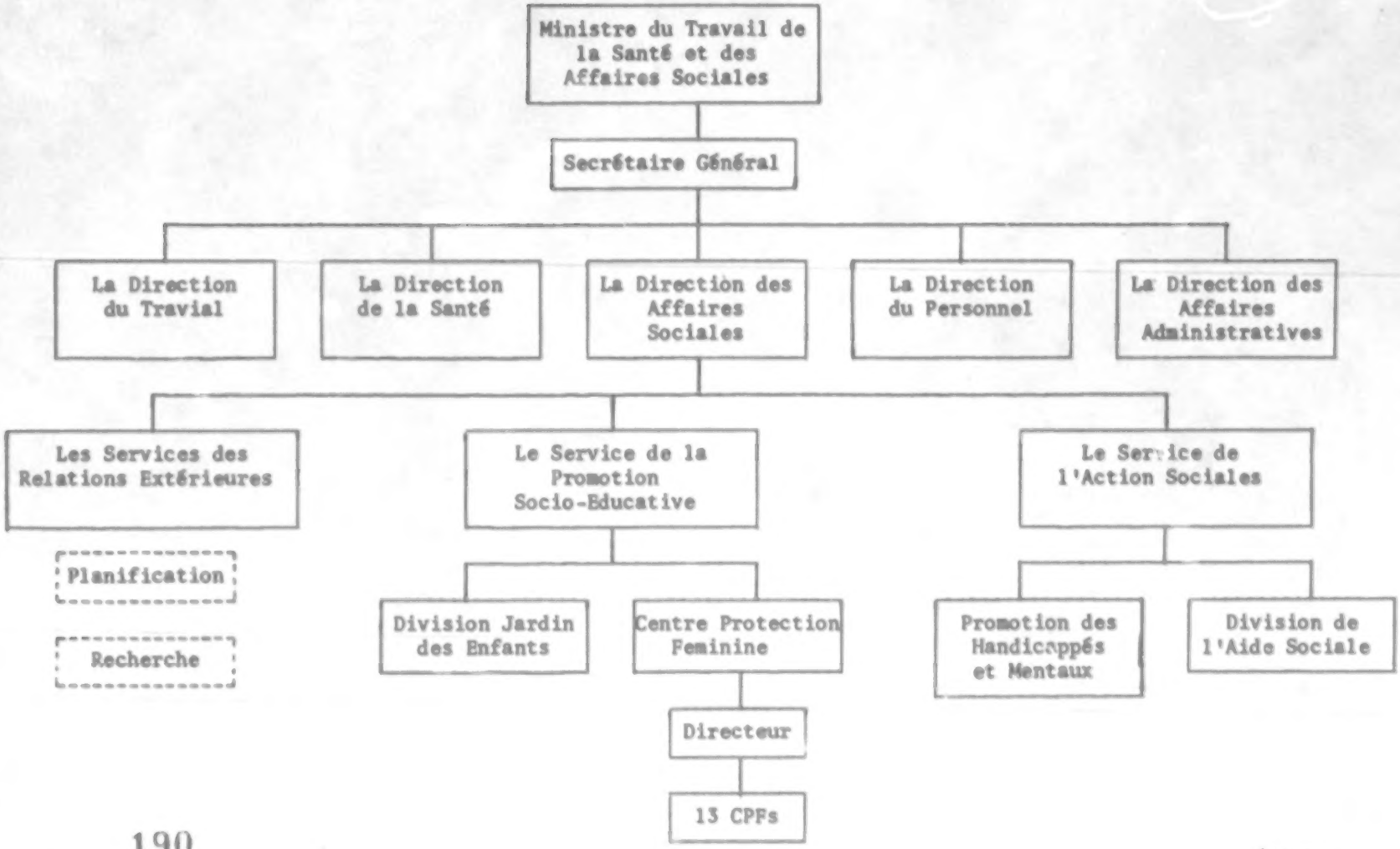
ORGANIGRAMME I: PMI



188

189

ORGANIGRAMME II: CPF


Ministre du Travail de la Santé et des Affaires Sociales
Secrétaire Général
La Direction du Travial
La Direction de la Santé
La Direction des Affaires Sociales
La Direction du Personnel
La Direction des Affaires Administratives
Les Services des Relations Extérieures
Planification
Recherche
Le Service de la Promotion Socio-Educative
Division Jardin des Enfants
Centre Protection Feminine
Directeur
13 CPFs
Le Service de l'Action Sociales
Promotion des Handicappés et Mentaux
Division de l'Aide Sociale

APPENDIX 5

VILLAGES VISITED - JUNE-AUGUST 1980

Boutilimit
Kamour
Achram
Guĕrou
Kiffa
N'Takat-el-Wasa
Billouwaire
Oued Rhoda
Legrane
Sani
Le Gleib-Saghĕer
Boumdeyt
Boghe
Moundi
Theynil
Seyna Kouna
Dar-el-Barka
N'Goral Gidali
Selibaby
Danquĕremou
Gouraye
Oulyinge
M'Bagne

GLOSSARY

Ar - Arabic
fem - feminine
Fr - French
H - Hassaniya
P - Pular
pl - plural
S - Soninke
W - Wolof

abd (H, pl abid): a social grouping; a bidan family slave

bidan (Ar, H): literally, 'whites;' used in reference to individuals of noble ancestry, descendants of Arabo-Berber group, including Zawaya and Hassani subgroups

ceddo (P, pl sebbe): the former Toucouleur 'warrior' group; generally today, free cultivators, although not considered among Toucouleur 'nobles'

dieri: the high ground beyond the walo (oualo) cultivated under rainfed millet/niebe/melons agriculture

falo: the riverbanks planted as the water recedes

fedde (P, pl pelle): association, specifically, age-set group

fondé: the high ground along the riverbank that only floods during exceptional rainy seasons

forgeron (Fr, fem forgeronne): blacksmith, artisan of metalworking socio-occupational or caste group

foyré; dyom foyré: group corresponding to nuclear family and its head; the basic economic unit of Toucouleur society

gallé; dyom gallé; gallé mawdo: the extended family household sharing a common concession or compound; the head of the gallé household and official head

griot (griote): praise-singers, entertainers, genealogists, socio-occupational or caste group

guerr (W, pl guerrs): the freemen, or 'nobles' group among the Wolof

guetna (H): the milk or date cure, meaning the date harvest, an occasion where bidan families reassemble to enjoy the fruits of the harvest, enacting various business and social decisions for the coming year

gumbo; gombo: okra

haratin (H): a social grouping; freed slaves or descendants thereof who are usually the sharecroppers and herders of the bidan

hassani (Ar, H): a social grouping; descendants of warrior bidan tribes

keur (W): Wolof household or fundamental economic unit

khaima (Ar): the tent, or fundamental unit of bidan society

khordo (P, pl korbe): female descendant of former slaves

marigot (Fr): inland tributary or delta of a river which blocked off from the main channel, becomes a pool following the rainy season

matiubé (P, otherwise maccube): social grouping; decendants of former slaves

moudaf (H): 'tripling' or a transaction in which, through the exchange of two or three products, the value of one is doubled, tripled, or augmented in terms of the other

moude (H): a measure equalling approximately 3 to 4 kilos, depending on the region

niebe: cowpeas

nyenyo (P, pl nyeenbe): the artisan occupational or casted groups of the Toucouleur

pagne: bolt of cloth worn by Peulh, Wolof, Soninke and Toucouleur women

paradigm: from Thomas Kuhn's "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions," a conceptual framework and methods or standards which guide the way problems are conceived of and solved

pastèques (Fr): melons

Peulh (Fr for Fulbe, or Eng, Fulani): free pastoralists closely related through economic relations and some social institutions, such as marriage to the Toucouleur, and especially, toroobe group

prototype: the first or primary type; a pattern, model, standard, exemplar, archetype

salumo (S): men's individual fields (Soninke)

te-khore (S): Soninke family-owned and cultivated fields

thioubalo (P, pl subalbe): fisherman; one of the free Toucouleur castes or socio-occupational groups

tontine: a rolling common savings fund

torodo (P, pl toroobe): the former Toucouleur ruling group, 'nobles,' free landlowners

Toucouleur (Fr for Halpulaaren): people inhabiting the river region, largest political entity of which was Fouta Toro

tressing: plaiting, from 'tresser' (Fr)

walo (P): floodplains bordering the river in which a variety of crops are produced after the rainwaters recede

yakharinte (S): Soninke women's individual fields

Zahwi (H), pl Zawaya): descendants of bidan marabout, or religious tribes

Zenaga (H): herders of bidan-owned camels, of low status, non-herd-owning

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

GENERAL BACKGROUND ON MAURITANIAN SOCIETY

Boutillier, J. L., P. Cantrelle, J. Causse, C. Laurent, Th. N'Doye, La Moyenne Vallée du Sénégal, Presses Universitaries de France, Paris, 1962

Colvin, Lucie Galliste, "Ch.X: La Mauritanie," Les Migrants et l'Economie Monétaire en Senegambie: Rapport final de l'Etude sur les Migrations en Senegambie, USAID Contract No. AID/AFR-C-1363, 1980

Diop, Aodoulaye Bara, Société Toucouleur et Migration, Institut de l'Afrique Noire, Université de Dakar, Dakar, 1965

Dubié, P., "La Vie matérielle des Maures," Mélanges Ethnologiques, No. 23, Mémoires de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire, IFAN, Dakar, 1953

Fikry, Mona, "Rapport Preliminaires," Profils Sociologiques: La Mauritanie Negro-Africaine, RAMS, Nouakchott, March 1980, unofficial document

_____, _____, "Rapport Preliminaires," Profils Sociologiques: Les Maures, RAMS, Nouakchott, March 1980, unofficial document

Panet, Léopold, intro, Robert Cornevin, Première Exploration du Sahara Occidental, Relation d'un Voyage du Sénégal au Maroc, 6 janvier - 25 mai 1850, Paris, Livres Africains, 1968

Wane, Yaya, Les Toucouleurs du Fouta Toro (Sénégal): Stratification sociale et Structure familiale, IFAN, Dakar, 1969

War on Want, The Guidimakha Region of Maruitania: A Critical Analysis Leading to a Development Project, War on Want, U.K., 1977

_____, Projet de Développement agricole au Guidimakha: Rapport d'Activités et de Recherches, War on Want, U.K., 1979

OTHER SOCIOLOGICAL BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Grayzel, John Aron, "Cultural Background and Social Soundness Analysis for Proposed Irrigation Project at Mataam, Senegal," Bechtel Corporation, San Francisco CA, 1 July 1976

_____, _____, The Ecology of Ethnic Class Identity Among an African Pastoral People: The Doukoloma Fulbe, dissertation, Dept of Anthropology, U. of Oregon, September 1977

Little, Kenneth, African Women in Towns: An Aspect of Africa's Social Revolution, Cambridge U. Press, 1973

Nelson, Cynthia, "Women and Power in Nomadic Societies in the Middle East," The Desert and the Sown, ed. Cynthia Nelson, Research Series No. 21, Institute for International Studies, U. of California-Berkeley, 1973

Van Chi, R., Vie de Relations au Sénégal: La Circulation des Biens, No. 90, IFAN, Dakar, 1978

DOCUMENTS USED FOR THEORETICAL BACKGROUND ON WOMEN'S PRODUCTION IN SEDENTARIZED AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

Blumberg, Rae Lesser, "Women and Work around the World: A Cross-Cultural Examination of Sex Division of Labor and Sex Status," Beyond Sex Roles, Alice G. Sargent, ed., St. Paul, West Publishing, 1976

Boulding, Elise, "Women, Peripheries and Food Production," paper presented to Consortium for International Development, U. of Arizona, Tucson, January 1978

Carr, Marilyn, Appropriate Technology for African Women, ITTG, 1978

Chaney, Elsa, Emmy Simmons, Kathleen Staudt, "Background Papers for U.S. Delegation," World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, FAO, Rome, 1979

Cloud, K., "Sex Roles in Food Production and Distribution Systems in the Sahel," paper presented to Consortium on International Development, U. of Arizona, Tucson, January 1978

Dixon, Ruth, Rural Women at Work, Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1980

Hoskins, Marilyn, Women in Forestry, PPC/WID, 1980

Simmons, Emmy, "The Small-Scale Rural Food-Processing Industry in Northern Nigeria," Food Research Institute Studies, Vol, XIV, No. 2, 1975

_____, _____, Economic Research on Women in Rural Development in Northern Nigeria, OLC Paper No. 10, Monrovia, Liberia, September 1976

Spring, Anita, and Art Hansen, "Women's Agricultural Work in Rural Zambia: from Valuation to Subordination," U. of Florida, undtd

Staudt, Kathleen, "Women Farmers and Inequities in Agricultural Services," Rural Africana, No. 29, Winter 1975-6

_____, _____, "Tracing Sex Differentiation in Donor Agricultural Programs," Department of Political Science, U. of Texas, El Paso

_____, _____, "Development Interventions and Differential Technology Impact between Men and Women," U. of Texas, El Paso

Tinker, Irene, "New Technologies for Food Chain Activities: the Imperative of Equity for Women," 1979, distributed by AID/PPC/WID

DOCUMENTS USED FOR BACKGROUND ON WOMEN IN PASTORAL SYSTEMS

Boulding, Elise, "Nomadism, Mobility and the Status of Women," for Eighth World Congress of Sociology, Toronto, 1974

Davis, Susan Schaefer, "Working Women in a Moroccan Village," Women in the Muslim World, ed. Lois Beck and Nikkie Keddie, Howard U. Press, 1978

Fernia, Elizabeth W. and Robert A., "A Look Behind the Veil," Human Nature, January 1979

Maher, Vanessa, "Women and Social Change in Morocco," Women in the Muslim World, ed. Lois Beck and Nikkie Keddie, Howard U. Press, 1978

Murdock, Muneera Salem, "The Impact of Agricultural Development on a Pastoral Society: the Shukriya of the Eastern Sudan," Dept of Anthropology, State U. of New York, Binghampton, April 1979

Youssef, Nadia, "Education and Female Modernization in the Muslim World," Journal of International Affairs, Vol, 30, No. 2, 1976-7

_____, _____, "Prospects for Growth in Rural Societies with or without Active Participation of Women," paper presented at Princeton, NJ, December 1974

_____, _____, "Women in the Muslim World," Women in the World, ed. Lynne Iglitzen and Ruth Ross, CLIO Books, 1976

WOMEN AND MIGRATION BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Bryant, Coralie, "Women Migrants, Urbanization and Social Change: An African Case, AID/DSP, date unknown

Chaney, Elsa, "Women in International Migration: Issues in Development Planning," June 1980, AID/OTR-147-80-46

Little, Kenneth, "Some Methodological Considerations in the Study of African Women's Urban Roles," Urban Anthropology, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1975

Youssef, Nadia and Mayra Buvinic, Women-Headed Households, International Center for Research on Women, Washington, D.C., March 1978

_____, _____ and _____, Women in Migration: A Third World Focus, ICRW, 1979

DOCUMENTS USED ON WOMEN IN MAURITANIA

Abderrahmane, Ould Hamza, "La Condition de la Femme Mauritanienne en Evolution," La Mauritanie en Mutation, 1971

Abeillé, Barbara, A Study of Female Life in Mauritania, AID/Nouakchott, Summer 1979

Delarozière, Marie-Francoise, "La Femme Mauritanienne en devenir," Coopération et Développement, No. 26, July/August 1969

le Dossier de la Mauritanie, Ch. XVI, "La Mauritanienne Feministe du Desert," Appendix, Barbara Abeillé, op cit 1979

Leriche, A., "De l'Enseignement Arabe feminin en Mauritanie," Bulletin Institut Fondemental de l'Afrique Noire, No. XIV, July 1952, p 975

DOCUMENTS USED ON ECONOMY OF MAURITANIA

Covu, Dan "Etudes des Echanges inter-frontalières Rosso-Mauritanie," U. of Dakar, 1971

IBRD, Report No. 2479a-MAU, Recent Economic Developments and External Capital Requirements, 4 June 1979

Ministry of Plans and Mines, Panorama of the Economic Situation, August 1978

_____, Economic and Financial Rehabilitation Plan, September 1978

Westebbe, The Economy of Mauritania, Praeger, New York, 1974

FOOTNOTES - ENGLISH TRANSLATION

PAGE - FOOTNOTE	TRANSLATION
1 - 1	Inasmuch as the castes belonging to the same category may intermarry, they are exogamous each in terms of the other, but endogamous in terms of the category that encompasses them.
2 - 1	The economy (of the river) remains archaic ... Fouta's is a subsistence economy ... of home consumption ... the valley has never known the introduction of export crops ... almost all (activity) is constituted by the primary sector: agriculture, fishing and livestock.
3 - 1	This preeminence of the head of the family in property rights had certain limits. Under the code of indivisibility, he was unable to alienate any portion of the family goods; under the rules of the patrimony, he could not disinherit any member of the group.
4 - 1	She helped her mother in household work and from the age of 15 she prepared the midday meal for the men working in the fields and each noon carried it to the fields. During the harvest, she helped her father to harvest.
13 - 1	All the five women are fish sellers and each takes her turn at staying home to prepare meals. They buy the fish at the beach. Even if the fish are their husbands', they must pay because the revenue is for them alone. Each woman sells her fish individually.
13 - 3	Her grandmother was a woman whose knowledge was well known in the village - being thioubalo, a people specialized in the knowledge of the waters, they have understanding which permits them to venture in any way and at any time in seas and rivers. Thus her grandmother treats those who have imprudently swallowed fishbones and who are in danger of death, or those who are attacked by the water spirits - which made her the most famous of her family. Her mother also holds this knowledge but cannot practice as long as her grandmother is living.
14 - 2	It is in some sense a profession, but without salary they sing and dance to honor the host. In return, they receive clothing, money and sometimes even jewelry.
14 - 3	Nevertheless there are times when the monthly ration runs out before the end of the month as well as the sum for daily expenses. Being griote, she guarantees provisions through the end of the month ... finding torobe, fulbe, etc., to request their help.
15 - 1	Sometimes it happens that a generous soul gives her a set of clothing.
16 - 1	The woman is a laundress in a prominent Pular family who were the owners of her family in the past. The mother, so that her children would not be born in captivity, bought her liberty, using all of her possessions. This has permitted them to earn a wage from the Pular family which now considers her to be an employee who earns an honest living as a freewoman.

PAGE - FOOTNOTE	TRANSLATION
16 - 3	These women do not work at the time of the festivities. They go directly to the host, make known their presence and wait comfortably for the host to give them money, which they divide up equitably. They are all from Niabina, M'Bagne. There are seven of them. They do this only when the host is a torodo from M'Bagne.
17 - 1	The money which she receives at festivities is carefully saved in her room. She can later purchase jewelry or buy her own housing. The profits from her doughnuts are always added to her daily expense.
18 - 1	She used the harvest for the family food stores and kept it in a room with a bed on one side and the sacks on the other. She sold three or four sacks often to meet food needs.
20 - 1	The multiplicity of monetary revenue sources should be noted. According to the average budget, no single category of receipts corresponds to over 20% of the total ... the economy appears curiously equilibrated ... If the figures are broken down in terms of household by number of revenue sources utilized, it becomes evident that the diversity of activities existing on the regional (macro) level is reproduced at the level of the household ... a population of petty-earners ... all the resources, all the activities are mobilized in each household in order to meet monetary needs.
20 - 2	The incidence of polygamy does not appear to be related to occupational (caste) category.
23 - 1	Given the great variety of tenure types and methods for their application, it is difficult to determine the proportion of cultivated area under each type. Today, at a time when the groundwork for projects is being established, the Valley lacks a regulated tenure structure. ...the adherence to the concept of 'indivisibility' and the difficulty in selling land inhibits attempts to improve the value of the land.
24 - 1	Plots are rarely lent to women who are married to men outside the family group because of fear of alienation of family lands. Marriage outside the family is relatively frequent despite the preference for marriage between cousins. If regional customs permit, the married woman therefore prefers to obtain her own personal, rather than family, plot which she may transmit to her children.
24 - 2	I sell everything - cookware, skirts, anything - everything can be sold.
25 - 1	...the husband, absent for several months, and having left no means of subsistence to the wife.
2[illegible] - 1	The revenue of this woman is kept for gold and clothing since, she says, the men don't give them presents... the men content themselves with supplying food... the men's concern is to have many boats and earn a lot of money for God knows what.
27 - 2	Public opinion holds that it is especially the women who are concerned in the sumptuous expenditures - under the pretext of respect for tradition, but also because the practice of polygamy incites the women of the same man to conspicuous consumption.

PAGE - FOOTNOTE	TRANSLATION
28 - 1	...her father being captive (and her mother as well). Before her own and her brothers' birth, her father sold all the livestock he possessed to their masters. Long ago, when there were battles, people dispersed and the stronger captured the weak, making them slaves and selling them. These captives had to work very hard in order to buy their liberty.
28 - 3	After the harvest, the product is kept in granaries for the year's food consumption and the seed is kept for the following year... each member has the right to use the harvest if he/she has planted, but must first see the head of the family for authorization.
34 - 2	The power is based on the supremacy of one caste or clan over other castes. The Emir is perhaps a despot, but a very feeble despot, at the mercy of his entourage, and prisoner of his partisans and the parasites living at his expense; these supporting him only to the extent that they profit from him.
35 - 1	I was reflecting on this one day as I walked through the fields, when an Arab arrived and asked his wife, gathering dates, what had become of two blocks of salt he had left in his house. "I borrowed them," she replied, "to buy some henna." "Can you return them now?" "No," replied the woman, "but within two days." A silence followed, and the husband, raising his voice said, "Aran h'lek." It was finished, their marriage had just been dissolved. The woman soon left the fields and went to prepare her baggage. As for unmarried or free women, they receive, with or without the open consent of their parents, visits from young people, entertaining and conversing with them. I thought of this in seeing the familiarity that existed between the two sexes, and later, the openness with which they often stopped me to ask if I had money.
40 - 1	The fertility of women being low, their pregnancies rarely normal... noting that they are more resistant, the Moors (Bidan) married black concubines whose children tolerated the rigors of the climate with greater success than those of the white (Bidan) women.
45 - 2	In regions of extensive rainfed agriculture, there is a tendency toward agricultural in-migrations and concentration of landholdings. These migrations and the growing permanent population of Haratins in the South will soon lead to a relative saturation of arable land area under existing production techniques. However, these agricultural migrations originally favored a certain development of cereal production in the valley. The valley was an (regional) exporter of cereals until the 1940s.
46 - 1	In the city or the countryside, indebtedness is largely caused by the low earnings and the low purchasing power of these earnings. Everywhere, credit has become indispensable for survival.
46 - 2	Allah has declared exchange to be hasty and usury to be illicit... Allah will nullify the profits of usury while he will multiply those of alms.
46 - 3	X gives Y a quantity of rice or tea or cloth and reclaims the next month a share of animals of which the value is considerably greater.

PAGE - FOOTNOTE	TRANSLATION
48 - 1	This corresponds to the development of economic poles outside of Mauritania. For the colonial, Mauritania will essentially constitute a reserve of consumption goods, livestock, and to a lesser extent human workforce; this cheap labor will allow exploitation of the Senegalese peanut zone to be even more profitable.
49 - 1	"In 1904 the livestock market was established in Louga centralizing Mauritanian livestock arrivals in order to distribute them through Dakar and Gambia."
51 - 4	The PUF study claims that "close to 40% of monetary revenues in the valley and therefore more than 20% of total revenue, including barter and value of home consumed goods, results from the revenue transfers from outside the valley..."
55 - 2	Those who live around the migrants, and who are effective consumers, constitute a group of dependents who are much more expensive and permanent than those who remain in Fouta.
55 - 3	The most striking characteristic of urbanization in Mauritania is its concentration in Nouakchott, an administrative center with few productive activities.
56 - 1	Few immigrants have been integrated into the wage-earning sector. On the contrary, they have searched for opportunities in the private sector: commerce, subordinate employment, water-selling ... real estate speculation.
56 - 2	When the Toucouleur reaches a certain degree of professional specialization, he fixes himself more or less definitively where he has stable employment.
58 - 1	This is not a market, this is not commerce, it's a way to fill time ... it's underemployment.
79 - 3	She continued her studies through CM2. She would like to work but her husband categorically refused. He says that she will lose her sense of tradition and will feel capable of doing whatever she wants or become a little ambitious woman who is ready to doing anything for money.
83 - 1	From time to time, she buys herself jewelry - but rarely, since she must obligatorily send 4000 UM/month to her family, as well as clothing and food. She must also nourish six people who live at her house in Nouakchott.
85 - 1	Their friends will throw barbs at them ... but most of the older women accept them.